DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 312 644 CS 212 119

AUTHOR Franklin, Sharon, Ed.
TITLE Making the Literature, Writing, Word Processing Connection: The Best of the Writing Notebook. 2nd Edition.
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 199p.
AVAILABLE FROM Creative Word Processing, P.O. Box 1268, Eugene, OR 97440-1268 ($21.00 single copy plus 7% shipping; 11-25 copies, $19.00 each plus 7% shipping; 26-99 copies $16.00 plus 7% shipping).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Computer Assisted Instruction; Computer Software; *Cooperative Learning; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Keyboarding (Data Entry); Language Arts; Learning Activities; Poetry; Staff Development; Student Publications; Teacher Developed Materials; *Word Processing; *Writing Across the Curriculum; Writing for Publication; *Writing Instruction; Writing Laboratories; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS Literature Based Instruction; *Process Approach (Writing)

ABSTRACT

Based on the conviction that word processing can be used to support the key elements in process writing, writing across the curriculum, cooperative learning, and literature-based instruction, this collection of 90 short articles offers a diversity of ideas to help build an enriched student-, language-, and world-centered curriculum. The book is intended to help teachers develop student, class, and community oriented activities that will teach the skills of literacy and citizenship. The book is divided into 13 chapters, as follows: (1) Editorials; (2) Writing and Word Processing; (3) Keyboarding; (4) Writing Using Specific Software; (5) Cooperative Learning; (6) Writing as a Process; (7) Staff Development; (8) Publishing Student Writing; (9) Writing across the Curriculum; (10) Timely Writing Ideas; (11) Poetry; (12) Curriculum/Study Units; and (13) Computer as Pen Pal. (SR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED312644

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sharon Franklin

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MAKING THE LITERATURE, WRITING, WORD PROCESSING CONNECTION: The Best of The Writing Notebook 2nd Edition

Introduction by
Jon Madian and Sharon Franklin

Compiled and edited by
Sharon Franklin

Published by
THE WRITING NOTEBOOK:
Creative Word Processing in the Classroom
P.O. Box 1268 • Eugene, OR 97440-1268

The Writing Notebook was created by Jon Madian in 1983
under the name Creative Word Processing in the Classroom
and continues today under the editorial leadership of
Sharon Franklin and Jon Madian
with the support of a strong Editorial Advisory Board.
The purpose of the journal remains:
to help educators assume a greater role in the
evolution and creation of an integrated curriculum,
with a special interest in the humanities and particularly
literature as the vehicle around which an enriched
instructional process should evolve, and to
support the wise use of technology toward humane ends.
The Writing Notebook is published four times during
the school year.
For further information on how you may join
The Writing Notebook network of educators and
receive The Writing Notebook, please write:
The Writing Notebook, P.O. Box 1268,
Eugene, OR 97440-1268; ph. 503/344-7125.

Fourth Printing June 1988
First Printing (Second Edition) October 1988

Copyright © 1987, 1988, 1989 by The Writing Notebook:
Creative Word Processing in the Classroom

Printed in Eugene, Oregon

Permission is granted to reprint any article in this book for
classroom use or for inservice purposes provided
full credit is given the authors and
Making the Literature, Writing, Word Processing Connection:
The Best of The Writing Notebook.
The Writing Notebook appreciates being asked for permission
to reprint for other more extensive uses.
Please write The Writing Notebook,
P.O. Box 1268, Eugene, OR 97440-1268; ph. 503/344-7125.

This book is dedicated to all the superb teachers and students
whose ideas, philosophy, and vision are woven
into this anthology.

Special thanks to Percy Franklin for his
invaluable assistance on this project, and to
The International Council for Computers in Education
for their support of this work.

CONTENTS

Introduction—*Jon Madian and Sharon Franklin* 5

Chapter 1 Editorials 7

It's a Beginning—*Jon Madian*—8
Using Occam's Razor to Hone the Cutting Edge—*Jon Madian*—9
Curriculum Renewal and the Chinese Cleaver—*Jon Madian*—10
Crashing Through Open Doors, Etc.—*Stephen Marcus*—11
Designing Situations—*Sharon Franklin and Jon Madian*—12
Let's Insert the Disk and Remove the Cover from Discovery Learning—*Jon Madian*—13

Chapter 2 Writing and Word Processing 15

Computers and Teaching Writing: What Do "They" Say About It?—*Bruce Fleury*—16
Key Ideas—18
One Computer in a Classroom: Is It Educationally "Worth It?"—*Jon Madian and Karen Jostad*—20
One Computer in the K-8 Classroom—*Cathy Gunn*—21
A Survey of Elementary Students' Attitudes Toward Word Processing—*Keith Wetzel*—23
Designing a Writing Lab—*Bernajean Porter*—25
Hazelwood West Writing Lab: A Center of Excellence—*Anne Wright*—27
How a 45-minute Writing Lab Works—28
Problem-solving Strategies for Writing Centers—*Peter Adams*—29
A Model High School Writing Lab: An Interview with Barbara Smigala, St. Louis Park High School, St. Louis Park, Minnesota—31
Lab Tips—*Ted Detjen*—34
Connecting Literature with Writing at the Intermediate and Secondary Level—*Karen Jostad*—35
Style Checkers: Good News and Bad News—*Stephen Marcus*—38
Teaching Writing Style Through Hidden Sentences—*Karen Jostad*—39
Pleasing Ourselves First: Another Perspective on Writing and Word Processing—*Annette Paparello*—40
Classroom Writing Activities to Support the Curriculum—*Judy Piper*—42

Chapter 3 Keyboarding 43

Keyboarding Issues and Concerns—*Karen Jostad and Jon Madian*—44
Keyboarding—An Interview with Keith Wetzel—46
Keyboarding/Word Processing Topics . . . Some Findings—49
Primary Keyboarding—*Cathy Gunn*—50
Keyboarding: A Kinesthetic Approach to Reading through Writing—*Jon Madian*—53

Chapter 4 Writing Using Specific Software 55

FrEd Writing—*Bruce Fleury*—56
FrEd Writing: Computer Organized Writing—*Bruce Fleury*—57
FrEd Typer—*Bruce Fleury*—59
FrEd Writing: Computer Organized Writing for Kindergarten—*Bruce Fleury*—61
Writing with the Turtle—*Judy Bachman*—63
"Easing" into LogoWriter—*Judy Bachman*—66
The Milliken Word Processor Reproducible Writing Outlines—69
Writing Up a Storm—71
Tailoring Stories into Plays with Story Tailor—*Jon Madian*—73
Middle School Writers—Using Bank Street Writer to Fuel the Writing Process—*Wilma Weisenstein*—74
Writing Skills with Write On!—*Jon Madian*—77

Chapter 5 Cooperative Learning 79

Cooperative Learning and Staff Development—*Mary Male*—80
Seating for Cooperative Learning—*Jon Madian*—83
Essential Ingredients of Cooperative Computer Lessons—*Mary Male, Roger Johnson, David Johnson, and Mary Anderson*—84
Group Role Evaluation Sheet—88
Group Skills Sheet—89

Chapter 6 Writing as a Process 91
Uses of the Computer in Teaching the Composing Process—*Irene D. Thomas*—92
Prewriting Strategies—*Anne Auten*—93
Researcher, Writer, Editor, Publisher—*Karen Jostad*—94
The Computer, Cooperative Learning, & The California Writing Project—*Alma Casey Allen*—97
Revising: An Approach for All Seasons—*Peter Adams*—100
Conferencing Strategies—102
Responding to Student Writing—*Jon Madian*—103
A Template to Help Focus Writing Conferences and Peer Editing Sessions—104
Peer Editing Sheet—105
Process Writing Research Topics—*Anne Auten*—107

Chapter 7 Staff Development 109
Creating the Personal "Hook"—Staff Development Ideas to Get Teachers Started—*Bernajean Porter*—110
Training the Second Wave—*Jon Madian*—112
From Cave Walls to Computers—*Sheryl Jones*—115
Staff Development in Publishing Student Writing: An Interview with Ken Spurlock—*Sharon Franklin*—117
Training for Technology—Are You Ready?—*Carol Bly*—119
Horton Watkins High School: Mobilizing Resources in Technology—*Harriette Arkin*—121

Chapter 8 Publishing Student Writing 125
Managing Students' Writing: The Writing Folder—126
Science, etc.—A Journal of Student Science and Math Writing—*Ann Sevcik*—127
Multilingual Voices—*Jayne Nishizaki*—129
A Writing Cycle Approach—130
Organizing a Creative Writing Lab for Publishing—130
Show Business—*Stephen Marcus*—131

Chapter 9 Writing Across the Curriculum 133
Writing in Math Class? You Bet!—134
The Reading/Writing Connection—135
Data Bases 'R Us—*Stephen Marcus*—136
Five Language Acquisition Strategies for Limited English and Language Disabled Students—*Jon Madian*—139
Are Simulations Worth Your Time?—*Shirley Keran*—141
Angry Clouds and Frighty Fears—Science Poems—145
Writing in the Media Center—*Sharon Franklin*—147
Write to Think: Teaching about Social Conflict through Imaginative Writing—*Bill Bigelow and Linda Christiansen*—149
Writing in the Middle and Upper Grades—153
S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G Ideas—155
The Writing Family Project—*Bruce Fleury*—156
Electronic Mail—*Bernajean Porter*—157

Chapter 10 Timely Writing Ideas 159

Chapter 11 Poetry 165
Starting with Little Things: Poetry in the Classroom—*Ingrid Wendt*—166
Poetry and Cooperative Learning—*Jon Madian*—168
Poetry and Cooperative Learning, Part 2—*Jon Madian*—170
Poetry Lessons Designed for Computer Publishing—*Jon Madian*—172
Horton Watkins High School Poetry—176

Chapter 12 Curriculum/Study Units 177
A Scope and Sequence for Story Writing—*Jon Madian*—178
Animal Unit—182
Mythology—184
Making History—A Library Unit to Accompany 4th and 5th Grade Students' Study of History—*Sharon Franklin*—186
Consumer Education Meets Fictitious Travel Adventures—*Jon Madian*—190

Chapter 13 Computer as Pen Pal 191
Words Around the World: The Book/Net Project—*Peter Anderson*—192
The Computer as Literate Pen Pal—194
Using Personal Journals to Become a Pen Pal with Your Students—*Jon Madian*—196

Literature is a Matter of Survival

As a graduate student I remember my utter delight when considering a teaching machine that would provide diagnostics, tutorials, drill and practice, reinforcement, and recordkeeping. By 1983, the dreamed-of machine had arrived, and I found myself publishing a new journal to passionately oppose too great a reliance on the teaching machine properties of computers, particularly in language arts, at the expense of the expressive and social uses that word processing made possible. This publication was called *Creative Word Processing in the Classroom*, recently renamed *The Writing Notebook*.

These expressive and social uses seemed terribly important because we were observing that the atomization of language arts (history, math, and science, too) into facts and skills was killing the intellectual and emotional delight that should encourage education.

Furthermore, educators saw that in play, friendship, work, and storytelling, language functions as an elixir—soothing, stimulating, probing, and delighting. Language is the stuff of self-discovery and self-discovery leads to intelligence, sensitivity, and industry.

We now have two decades of research, several educational movements, and a national heritage that support an integrated, expressive approach to reading and writing instruction which includes language experience, The National Writing Project, writing as a process, discovery learning, humanistic psychology, and our historically derived conception of citizenship in a democracy.

Indeed, we agree with Owen Thomas that "language is a matter of survival." This is the reason the founding fathers insisted upon free public instruction. Only a literate person, one capable of expressing and receiving humanity through language in all its forms, can be a citizen hopeful of influencing the state toward greater intelligence.

As we educate students for today's world, we see that citizenship—global citizenship—takes on urgent new dimensions. The danger to survival requires unselfish and enlightened decisions. The earth as we love it will be preserved only if the intelligent will of the people influences the morality and humanity of commerce and government. Indeed, as the ozone, nuclear, and chemical menaces expand, the task sometimes seems impossible.

Thomas Jefferson stated that if there were any hope for the republic, it was through public education, by which he meant literacy—the ability to use spoken and written discourse for communication on matters of greatest importance to the individual.

Charlie Koepke, a junior high school science teacher, applies and advances Jefferson's concept when he suggests that every school in every town and city integrate science, social studies, and language arts instruction by having students research, report upon, and work to improve the environments in which they and their families live. After interviews, reading, and field research, students organize and present their data in reports, letters, editorials, stories, plays, and poems, and perhaps appear as witnesses to government committees. What an important idea for raising student *and* adult awareness.

It is our hope and the purpose of **Making the Literature, Writing, Word Processing Connection** and *The Writing Notebook* to inspire and help you to develop student, class, and community oriented activities that will teach the skills of literacy and citizenship. We hope you will see how easily word processing can be used to support the key elements in process writing, writing across the curriculum, cooperative learning, and literature-based instruction.

There are many ways to improve instruction, many great books to choose from, many wonderful units of instruction. As the editors of *The Writing Notebook*, we hope that in this carefully edited collection of articles you will find a healthy diversity of ideas that will help you build an enriched student-, language-, and world-centered curriculum.

Jon Madian and Sharon Franklin

1 Editorials

"To learn is to change.
Education is a process
that changes the learner."

George Leonard

It's a Beginning

I continue to be impressed with how quickly and enthusiastically educators grasp how word processing supports all major language arts curriculum movements: whole language, literature-based instruction; cooperative learning; higher-order thinking skills; and the writing process.

So why does there continue to be so much confusion about how to use computers in instruction?

Could it be that we lack the courage of our convictions? We say that word processing is clearly the most important computer application for education. We know that it fits perfectly with all major language arts and writing across the curriculum movements, yet we hesitate to say, "Yes, this is it! Let's keep putting all of our eggs into this basket until we get it right!"

Instead, we move in several directions at once, even when we have limited numbers of computers, limited software budgets, and even more limited instructional and staff development time. I recently visited with a gentleman who has been a leader in technology in California, has a strong science background and is now working at Apple. His major interest is in staff development. He took me aside and said, "You know, if I had my way for the next year or so I'd have people do nothing but word processing in the schools."

But is it that simple, even when you've agreed that word processing is the best direction? When visiting with one of the brightest computer coordinators I know, I was told with great delight that in their networked labs they'd be able to run the new CD ROM Encyclopedia Britannica, which they are definitely buying as soon as it is ready.

At first I shared the excitement. Imagine . . . kids and teachers will be able to access the encyclopedia, with graphics, without ever leaving their word processor. Here is a fairly sophisticated information source that coordinates with word processing and supports all curriculum areas.

But on second thought I had to wonder, will this become a technology to churn out more encyclopedia-generated reports? Except that now kids won't even need to recopy the text. They'll just download it.

I pointed out that perhaps an encyclopedia on disk isn't such a great thing for education. The coordinator's response was, "Well, you're probably right, but it's a beginning."

A beginning of what?

Perhaps the only way that beginnings can seed worthwhile ends is if beginnings contain the intellectual and aesthetic dimensions we are looking for. The fact that the technology can *do* it is no reason that we should spend time and money on staff development, hardware, software, and lessons to *use* it.

Please, let's do the simple things well. Let's design sound, exciting, thematic units (hopefully using word processing as our design tool), and then determine all the ways that we can use word processing functions (storage, hardcopy, revision, interaction), video, and especially good literature to support instruction.

If we just keep it simple, we will feel in control because we will be working in one direction and refining our knowledge and skills. We will trade our overly active hypertechnoism for a deeply considered feeling for education. Then, we will add new technologies, software, and video gradually and efficiently, because we'll understand what we're trying to do.

We will be astonished at the wonderful things that we and our students do. It, too, represents a beginning . . . but one that will make sense to us as educators.

Using Occam's Razor to Hone the Cutting Edge

Jon Madian

While many people are exploring the newest technologies and doing sophisticated instructional work with computers, most of us are just beginning to explore how to use computers to teach language arts. This is not surprising; computers are relatively new on the educational scene. Just sixteen years ago a PDP 8 minicomputer cost $5-10,000, and only a few were used for educational purposes in the entire country.

Some people fear that educators will fail to realize the potential in computer technology, and, as with other instructional technologies, after the initial excitement, computers will gather dust in overflowing closets. This concern that public instruction will defeat the use of computers is ill-founded (certainly overhead projectors never made this claim); computers can support instruction in many wonderful ways.

Listening to Bernajean Porter, Technology Coordinator, Colorado Department of Education; Cathy Gunn, Field Representative of the Technology Unit, Central Illinois Service Center; Eileen Hodrinsky, Reading Specialist from Shoreham-Wading River on Long Island; and Sharon Blakely from Let's Talk Computers and Writing in Orange County, California, there is one consistent message—we need to be certain that curriculum decisions drive computer-supported instruction.

All of these people and many, many more agree on the touchstones to guide the use of com puters for language arts instruction, writing as a process, literature-based writing, writing across the curriculum, integration of writing and reading, modeling, and cooperative learning.

These leaders agree that word processing is and will continue to be the most powerful educational use for computers and that it should be used for whole class, small group, and individual activities. If only one computer is available, use it to model composing, revising, and editing strategies. One computer also works well for small group writing, revising, and publishing.

There is agreement that word processing can fucntion in three related ways: as a tool to help students master the writing process from prewriting to publishing; as an instructional delivery system that provides hard copy samples of student writing, worksheets, or interactive instructional materials; and as a curriculum design tool for teachers to use to develop, store, revise, and expand lesson plans and related computer interactive and paper and pencil activities. In the last example, word processing is an authoring, storage, and delivery system.

The best and strongest traditions of sound instruction are currently embodied in literature-based instruction, discovery learning through writing as a process, and writing across the curriculum, and are examplified by The National Writing Project. These methods contain elements that good teachers have included in their lessons for many years. Now these elements, from modeling to creative self expression and publishing, can be powerfully enhanced by word processing.

As we face so many choices about how and what to teach using computers, perhaps Occam's Razor ("it is in vain to do with more what can be done with less" or "the simplest solution is the best") applies. Let's look at the many ways that these principles can be supported by word processing. Let's begin simply by helping teachers to see how they can use word processing to improve their own writing and how word processing can support their favorite methods of instruction. In keeping with Occam's Razor, the simplest solution is likely to be the most efficient, elegant, and far-reaching.

Curriculum Renewal and the Chinese Cleaver

Jon Madian

Technology, methods, and materials offer many new possibilities. But will they improve instruction, or will buying more technology and instructional programs further confuse already overwhelmed schools?

In many ways, the principles and practices of good instruction haven't changed that much over the years, although we've experienced a number of different curricular fashions. Now the school renewal movement says that effective change must take place at the local level—in the school site. Change from the bottom up. It calls upon teachers to function as professionals in a larger sense and to see themselves as designers of curriculum.

For curriculum renewal to occur successfully from the bottom up, schools and districts must realize that they are in the curriculum design business. They will want to explore how technology can support their design and dissemination efforts, and they will want to form design alliances with curriculum design groups and consultants. Spending less money than they do now for texts and district-generated curriculum guides, districts may become co-designers of an "ideal" curriculum in response to current research, best practices, and their own educational experiences.

Stated in another way, if school districts form curriculum design partnerships using their talented teachers to co-design materials with outside consultants and designers, we will begin to see steady improvement in the quality of our schools. If instead, districts continue to purchase "comprehensive" instructional packages and to write elaborate courses of study, education will continue to flounder.

At Peach Spring School on the Hualapai Reservation in Peach Spring, Arizona, education is moved by local curriculum design and by technology. This move toward locally developed and refined curriculum may be easier for these Indian people that for mainstream educators, since mainstream educational programs have never met their needs, and they've had to create many of their own materials. In 1975, for example, the Haulapai Indians invented a written alphabet and spelling for their language. Shortly after, they wrote *Spirit Mountain: An Anthology of Yuman Story and Song.*

Each of the eight classrooms has three computers in addition to a computer lab with 21 machines. Next year's goals include a new computer lab for writing and improving their literature-based lesons to include more dramatic interpretation, thinking skills, and a wide range of writing activities—poetry, essays, stories, letters, and personal and study journals.

They are ordering books of stories and poems. Many of the stories are chosen for their use of language patterns that inspire writing, and units are built around this literature. Students develop writing fluency and revision skills through use of teacher-developed word processing techniques and materials. Desktop publishing is encouraged.

Most exciting from the perspective of curriculum renewal, it seems likely that the teachers at Peach Spring School will use word processing to organize lesson plans and support materials. Such a library of experience-generated instructional materials and methods, refined through use, may prove to be one of the greatest educational legacies that technology offers.

How many centuries of use led to the design of the Chinese cleaver? And how long has it lasted? Perhaps in looking at curriculum, we need to begin designing a Chinese cleaver and stop rushing to make quick fixes. It's time to design a curriculum process that will last.

Crashing Through Open Doors, Etc.
(An Editorial, I Suppose)

Stephen Marcus

"Do word processors improve writing skills?"

Research on improving writing with computer-assisted instruction (CAI) falls prey to some of the same ills as does study in other areas concerned with the teaching of writing. At one extreme, the CAI research is like crashing through an open door: "Our one-year, $75,000 study suggests that computers may have some affect on kids' writing."

At another extreme, the focus of the research may be so narrow as to be virtually irrelevant to the actual teaching of writing (sort of like walking into a closed door): "Our keystroke-catcher analysis suggests that the backspace/spacebar ratio is inversely proportional to the physical dimensions of the disk on which the paper is stored, at the .05 level of statistical significance." (Both quotes are fiction based on fact.)

While I've characterized the above examples as Extremes, I would also label them as Commonly Found. This shouldn't be surprising, however, since theories and methods for studying the acquisition and use of writing skills are themselves still in the developmental stage. As an intervening variable, the computer is a particularly complex "event." It's little wonder that researchers have trouble carrying out studies that are rigorous, yet provide truly thought-provoking data.

"Okay, but does word processing improve writing skills?"

There is no shortage of anecdotal evidence. Such reports have, in fact, been a major factor in fueling the enthusiasm for computer use in writing. People work with word processors. They undergo minor to major transformations in their experience of themselves as writers. They report these changes to their friends, and they want to share them with their students. And so it goes.

Unfortunately (even if understandably), administrators under pressure to make major capital expenditures for equipment and software would like some harder evidence that the reportedly magical properties of the technology are not mere illusions. Fortunately, regular readers of professional publications will find ample support for their experience and intuition concerning the value of computer-assisted writing. (Those who remain skeptical—and those whose unbridled enthusiasm needs tempering—can also find abundant cautionary notes.)

"So...does word processing improve writing skills?"

While at Stanford University's Institute for Communication Research, William Paisley and Milton Chen asked some very astute questions about efforts to study the technology ("Children and Electronic Text," National Institute of Education study, 1982). In part, they wanted to know whether research questions were being asked at the time of the students' initial or later use of the technology, and whether the technology itself was in its early or mature state of development. We could add the question of whether the methods for *teaching* the technology are in their early or later stage of development.

And while we're at it, let's add the *very* interesting perspective of Steven Gilbert and Kenneth Green, from EDUCOM, who have suggested that the question "does word processing improve writing skills?" may be "more difficult and costly to measure than is warranted by the declining costs of providing the service" (*Change*, May/June 1986). To summarize their argument all too briefly, in situations where the technology is being used for a variety of purposes, it's getting harder and harder to determine exactly what proportion of those costs should be attributed to word processing, and no matter how you slice them, prorated costs are dropping rapidly.

By and large, students (and teachers) use word processors if they can freely choose to do so when and where they want to. Why should we be spending so much time (and money) proving whether or not they should? At Brown University, word processing is reducing by one year the average amount of time spent getting a doctorate. Should the money thus saved be used to determine whether graduate students should be using word processors?

Word processing technology is still evolving and is still fairly primitive—even when it does "windows." Methods for teaching the technology, and questions about how and whether it should be incorporated into the language arts curriculum, are themselves still matters of intense debate. Focused attention on what we are doing and how we are doing it is an important stage in setting goals and planning change. However, if the past is of any use in predicting the future, we can be fairly sure that advances in the technology itself will initially outstrip our immediate understanding of what to do with it—and what to make of it.

Research, even of the open- and closed-door varieties, often enriches the doer more than the reader. For teachers who want to "research" rather than just use the technology, there remain some rather straightforward goals. Ask not what word processors can do for your students. Ask what they do with their word processors. Learn from your students (and for yourself) what the technology can and cannot do and how it is changing their habits and attitudes. This is one nice way of getting students to think about their own composing process—what it used to be, what it is, what it could be like.

"Does word processing improve writing skills?"

Ask your students. And see if they can prove it. ■

[Stephen Marcus, Associate Director, South Coast Writing Project, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Santa Barbara]

Designing Situations

A speaker at the Aspen Design Conference was scheduled to speak on "The Situation in Design." As he settled himself before the microphone he said, " I believe I'd like to retitle this talk. I will speak on "Designing Situations."

He went on to say that people need to be aware that they are "designing situations" by the environments they create and by the social-cultural patterns they *structure*—related to *instruct*. He included teachers as designers of educational interactions—one of the more challenging design jobs. And he emphasized the importance of knowing what is most highly valued before beginning to design.

Architects must strike a bargain between function and joy; that is, a building must house particular functions as happily and efficiently as possible. The same is true in our schools. We must achieve functional skills while inspiring feeling and intelligence.

Highly valued for most educators, particularly in language arts, is the clear, intelligent, value-laden, enigmatic, paradoxical experience achieved by reading, discussion, and student writing. Publishing student writing begins the cycle anew, extending it into the realm of student authoring. Now we have the computer to simplify and complicate our lives—please note the paradox. The design challenge: how to use the computer to improve learning.

During the past four years **The Writing Notebook** has done its best to bring you good ideas about designing language lessons supported by word processing. The fact that we are beginning our fifth year indicates that either we have a rich aunt, administrators think this is good reading for teachers, or teachers are finding it useful. Which two of the above three do you believe is correct??

With the increased emphasis upon literature and the writing process, we see a true movement toward literature and child-centered learning. This year we will focus on how to build this kind of curriculum and how to use word processing and other language arts software to design truly excellent situations for learning language skills.

We look forward always to hearing from you—the movers and designers—as this network continues to grow!

Sharon Franklin and Jon Madian

Let's Insert the Disk and Remove the Cover From Discovery Learning

Jon Madian

The first two hurdles to using computers in instruction were, and to some degree remain, the cost of hardware and the lack of well designed, curricular-relevant software. However, in the last two years, with decreasing hardware costs and better software, the main constraint upon increased use of computers has shifted to the lack of staff development.

Understandably, teachers are saying: "How can I teach my students to use computers (or word processing) when I'm so unsure myself? I'll look like a fool! What will I give up if I add word processing to my program?

The first concern, "How can I teach my students to use word processing when I'm so unsure myself?" raises a much larger educational issue: Are teachers to function as authorities or as facilitators? Is a teacher's proper role to provide answers, or is it to provide an environment for exploration and discovery?

Whenever one person is an expert in every situation, that person's power is inflated at everyone else's expense. It is time for teachers to shift their model from that of teacher-as-expert to one of teacher-as-facilitator, a person who provides the environment, time, support, and materials necessary for questioning and discovery.

One key benefit of introducing computers into the classroom is that teachers can stop being authorities. We are all new to computers, so we can discover how to use this tool together. For those of us who give up the illusion that it is best for students if the teacher has all the answers, and who embrace the idea that if the teacher isn't an authority then students will take a more active role as learners and problem solvers, the computer offers a medium to support the change from an authoritative to a democratic, discovery model of learning.

Cooperative learning puts it nicely: NONE OF US IS AS SMART AS ALL OF US! This is particularly true where computers are concerned.

The significance of the shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning, from authority to discovery, goes even deeper. Teachers and students need permission not to know and to make mistakes. Learning, after all, requires confusion, the tension of not knowing, of groping. Poets, scientists, and everyone who tries to solve a problem (or write an idea) struggles with and even courts the tension of wandering down sterile, uncertain pathways to peer, sometimes suddenly, into new realms of insight.

The second teacher concern, "What will I give up if I add computers to my instructional program? I just can't add one more thing!", also extends into the essence of educational practices. Word processing does not further segment the curriculum. Nothing new is added beyond a few hours needed to master the basics of using a word processor. The idea is to use this tool to support the best elements in a sound writing/reading curriculum and the writing process.

If, while learning to use computers, we learn to trust not knowing and to court the creative tension necessary for inquiry leading to discovery; and if, while learning to use computers, we see word processing as a tool that supports cooperative learning, writing across the curriculum, writing as a process, and the integration of reading and writing, then we will find that by defining our proper relationship with computers, we will redefine our proper relationship to what and how we teach and learn.

Let's welcome the opportunity technology offers us. Without being certain about what we're doing, let's insert the disk and remove the cover from discovery learning.

2 Writing and Word Processing

"Word processing is the best justification yet for using computers in our classrooms and in our curriculum."

Irene D. Thomas

Computers & Teaching Writing:
What Do "They" Say About It?

Bruce Fleury

Many of us are now using computers to teach writing. Are our students writing better? What do the experts say about it? Check this review of research and related literature—

Two notable trends are converging to fashion new potential for education (Walshe, 1984). Since ancient times to the present, the *tools* of writing have constantly changed. From stylus on clay through quill on parchment, writing tools have evolved until today we may use a keyboard to write with streams of light on a video display (Appleby, 1983).

During the last two decades, writing *instruction* has also undergone change. A view of writing as a dynamic, recursive process is replacing the view of writing as a product of grammar and rules. The new view of writing instruction focuses on the process of writing instead of centering on grammar, convention, and rules of usage.

The traditional view assumes that composition is a solitary, one-step activity; the writer simply knows what he or she wants to say, then sits down and writes it. The traditional method of teaching writing focuses on the end product, or completed text, rather than on the process through which writing is created. In the traditional classroom, writing is assigned and then graded by the teacher. Attention is given to surface-level errors, with little attention paid to the deeper structure of the writing and the development of ideas.

The current view recognizes that composition is a multi-stage, recursive process. Writing requires generating, organizing, and reorganizing ideas. There is need for revision and editing, which includes not only surface changes at the word level, but also structural changes at the sentence and paragraph level (Wheeler, 1985).

The process-centered model of teaching writing is now converging with the educational application of the microcomputer with word processing software. Teaching writing as a process replaces the one-draft writing product with a model of how successful writers actually go about writing; the educational application of the word processing microcomputer is a powerful tool that enables pedagogical practices not possible before (Walshe, 1984).

Many professional writers now use word processors to write, rewrite, add, delete, rearrange, edit on the screen, and turn out the finished product on a printer; and nearly all journalists in the country input articles through computer terminals (Nancarrow, 1982; Withey, 1983). A reporter from a metropolitan newspaper who had been forced to learn to use the computer reported that, after initial reluctance, he had become addicted to writing on the computer. He reported that his stories were better written and that he could spend more time revising his writing. He found it was possible to write more in the same amount of time (Self, 1983).

Computer assisted writing is prevalent in the business world. Business and industry use computer assisted writing because of the time and cost savings, as well as the increased flexibility and quality. There is little question that the computer will transform the way we write (Halpern, 1980). If we wish to prepare students for writing outside the writing class, then we must include computer assisted writing in their preparation. Writing on a word processor has become a skill related to the actual cultural reality (Nancarrow, 1982).

In education, also, the new technology is becoming available. Most school systems have microcomputers in their budgets, and the declining cost of computing power continues to make new technology increasingly accessible to students. Computers that in the past were large, expensive, and inaccessible are now small, inexpensive, and transportable (Withey, 1983).

Teachers are beginning to realize advantages of computer assisted writing. Teachers who reported their first use of computers between 1980 and 1984 stressed that computers can eliminate repetitive tasks for both student and teacher.

Most of the computer sessions at the 1984 and 1985 National Council of Teachers of English conventions were related to computer assisted writing. It is in this area that the microcomputer could have the greatest impact on the English curriculum (Thomas, 1985). Computer assisted writing can free teachers to individualize instruction, organize collaborative learning, help in data collection and research, and modernize writing instruction (Stine, 1985). However, if we use a computer to assist in teaching writing, we must change our teaching methods (Nancarrow, 1982).

It should be understood that computer assisted writing will not revolutionize writing in the same way that calculators revolutionized math. Although students can use

calculators to do complex mathematics without understanding the underlying mathematical principles, if they use a word processor to write a paper, they still need to know how to write and revise their papers. A word processor will not write the paper for the student—it simply makes it more convenient; students can write with less physical labor and more thoroughness (Broad, 1983; Self, 1983).

Using word processors have been noted to improve attitudes toward writing and composition (Hennings, 1981). It significantly changes the process of writing on many levels (Meeker, 1984). Writers become better readers of their own work, and students are more willing to revise and clarify their ideas (Schwartz, 1983).

Word processing also enhances publication, the final stage of the writing process. The professional look of a well formatted, printed final product lends importance to the writing itself. This, along with the other advantages of computer assisted writing, results in a product that can be published, either for local display or for a broader audience (Mittricker, 1983).

Simon (1984) reveals some implications of introducing computer assisted writing into the language arts classroom. In a study on teaching writing on a word processor, it was found that "seventh grade students can successfully improve their time on task, number of words, number of revisions, and achievement in writing in an English curriculum unit that teaches writing skills on a word processor."

The interactive nature of writing with a word processor must be emphasized. The words on the computer screen can be readily changed. It has been suggested that computers may make it possible to go back to rhetorical thinking for the first time since writing (of the more permanent kind) was invented. Socrates lamented the newfound art of writing, believing that writing would destroy the art of rhetoric (Elias, 1984). Perhaps now, through interaction with our own writing, we can once again develop ideas rhetorically.

In summary, word processing can facilitate instruction in both the mechanics and the process of writing (Wheeler, 1985). Computer assisted writing can play an important role for both teacher and student in all phases of the writing process from prewriting to publication. Its presence in the English classroom seems to be a positive one (Mittricker, 1983). Word processing computers may even help students become better writers when they're not using a word processor (Wheeler, 1985). However, despite the great interest and hope in the use of word processing programs to help students improve their writing, research in the area has just begun (Kurth, 1984).

References

Appleby, Bruce C. (1983). Computers and composition: An overview. *Computers in Teaching English, 9.*

Broad, Richard G. (1983). Writing and word processing. *The Leaflet.* Rhode Island: New England Association of Teachers of English.

Elias, Richard. (1984, Spring). Will computers liberate the comp drudge? Conference of the Delaware Valley Writing Council.

Halpern, Jeanne W. (1980). Paper voices: How dictation and word processing are changing the way college graduates write. Purdue University.

Hennings, Dorothy Grant. (1981). Input: Enter the word-processing computer. *Language Arts, 58.*

Kurth, Ruth J., & Stromberg, Linda J. (1984). Using word processing in composition instruction. Sarasota, FL: American Reading Forum.

Meeker, Michael W. (1984). Word processing and writing behavior. Minnesota Council of Teachers of English.

Mittricker, Margaret L. (1983). Word processing and the writing process. *The Leaflet.* RI: New England Association of Teachers of English.

Nancarrow, Paula Reed. (1982). Integrating word processors into a freshman composition curriculum. Modern Language Association of America.

Schwartz, Helen J. (1983). Computer aids for individualizing instruction throughout the writing process. Conference on College Composition and Communication.

Self, Warren. (1983). The Computer: Changing writers' relationships with their composing process. *Computers in Teaching English.*

Simon, Jacqueline. (1984). Teaching writing on a word processor: Relationship of self-management and locus of control. (Teaching of writing: Abstracts of doctoral dissertations), *Dissertation Abstracts International, 45,* Nos.1-6.

Stine, Linda J. (1985). Answers that raise questions: Report on a survey of computer use in composition instruction. Philadelphia, PA: National Council of Teachers of English.

Thomas, Irene. (1985). Uses of the computer in teaching the composing process. Philadelphia, PA: National Council of Teachers of English, Committee on Instructional Technology.

Walshe, R. D. (1984). Writing, teaching, and the word processor: A computer discussion paper. Rozelle, Australia: Primary English Teaching Association.

Wheeler, Fay. (1985). Can word processing help the writing process? *Learning, 13,* 54-55.

Withey, Margaret M. (1983). The computer and writing. *English Journal, 72,* 24-31.

[Bruce Fleury, Mentor Teacher, Johnson Elementary School, El Cajon, CA.]

Note: Bruce Fleury is very interested in the informal observations of teachers who use word processing computers to teach writing. If you have experiences to share, write to him and he'll summarize the responses in a "Computers & Teaching Writing: What Do Teachers Say About It?" column in a future issue.

KEY IDEAS

WORD PROCESSING– THE CURRICULUM DESIGN TOOL FOR INSTRUCTIONAL RENEWAL!

It is likely that instructional renewal will not take place in schools until schools take more responsibility for curriculum design. Although many educators realize this, previously the lack of an efficient way to publish materials made the notion of the school or district as curriculum disseminator impractical. Perhaps desktop publishing will change this.

Instruction is improved by refinement, a process of customizing until what is taught fits the precise needs of students and teachers. Such refinement is open-ended, changing from teacher to teacher, from student group to student group, from time to time, from insight to insight.

Good materials inspire teachers to the point that their own enthusiasm creates new directions suitable to their own and their students' development. Therefore, a fine curriculum is self-renewing and needs to be created, stored, disseminated and revised on the best technology in order to support its evolution.

Clearly, bound textbooks, which are revised twice a decade, retard an ongoing refinement of instruction. Desktop publishing, on the other hand, supported by word processing and local curriculum design resources, offers the flexibility to support instructional renewal.

School districts are the natural place to create a truly customized, responsive curriculum. And those teachers and other curriculum specialists who delight in curriculum design are the natural resources of every school district. It is time that schools and school districts go beyond a commitment to staff development and get into the business of curriculum evolution.

"It is time that schools and school districts go beyond a commitment to staff development and get into the business of curriculum evolution."

In order to support such evolution, districts need to form ongoing curriculum design groups. At the simplest level such a design group would be made up of excellent teachers and good writers who understand kids and instruction. At the most sophisticated level, where new software or other media are being designed, programmers and other experts would be included. However the team is fashioned, it is essential that these people work together as a team-in-residence in the classroom.

For districts to successfully utilize their curriculum design resources, they will need to trust in the devotion of the design group and, as nearly as possible, make the design team a self-managing group. The function of administration is to bring the best resources together and provide financial and institutional support.

THE PROCESS APPROACH TO WRITING WITH WORD PROCESSING

The process approach to writing is based upon the social nature of writing and the need for revision and editing when writing for an audience. To write is to communicate, first with oneself and second with an audience. To write well requires that the writer think about how well the written text expresses the writer's intent to a particular audience.

The language experience approach (LEA) and poets-in-the-schools movement both emphasize writing toward a goal of publication. There are two reasons for this. First, it follows that if I wish to publish what I write, I will revise it until I get it right. So, if I write for publication, I buy into writing as a process that requires awareness of my audience, and therefore revision and editing.

Second, it is likely that if I write for publication, I will read what others have written. The work of others then serves as a model. Additionally, in subsequent years new generations of students can read good examples contained in published forms like anthologies.

To motivate students to write for publication, students need an approach, a form, and a theme. It isn't easy to find a writing activity that results in students wanting to publish what they write. Here we do well to look toward LEA, poets-in-the-schools, The National Writing Project, NCTE publications, Donald Graves, and like-minded curricula.

Word processing, with its revising, editing, and publishing capabilities, is ideal for supporting LEA and poets-in-residence-inspired writing activities. Indeed, until this technology arrived, student resistance to revision and the difficulties of getting a finished final draft for publication made these publication-oriented approaches an infrequently realized ideal. Now, with word processing, revision for publication is becoming a reality.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING, THE PROCESS APPROACH & WORD PROCESSING

Before word processing, the activity of writing was nearly as solitary as thinking. People almost never wrote together, because somehow, the labor of getting the information down and the permanence of what was written made the written product an identified "part" of the writer.

In a curious way word processing seems to change this. The very flexibility of the medium seems to decrease the writer's attachment to his or her words. As a result, people now write, revise, edit, and *enjoy* publishing in groups.

Cooperative learning and writing as a process naturally join together through peer editing and other editorial and publishing tasks. Cooperative interactions sometimes may be formally prescribed as students take on specialized functions such as editor, art designer, proofreader, and co-writer, or all of these functions may be shared by everyone on an informal basis.

Formally structured cooperative writing groups, in which two or more students create reports, poems, stories, letters, or any other written form, can benefit from using various cooperative learning strategies such as jigsaw, role specialization, and the excellent techniques developed for evaluating a group's process and product.

Whether two students, a teacher and student, an older and younger student, or a group of several students work together, cooperative writing makes the process approach and the related writing conference approach to motivating writing and improving skills a natural and satisfying experience.

FEEDBACK

To focus the revision and editing process, you may want to have students gain peer and adult feedback. One strategy is to have students sit in two circles facing each other. (Circles with four to eight students work well.) Each student reads his or her piece to the person sitting directly in front. Then one of the circles rotates by one seat and the process repeats. In this way students read their pieces (poems, stories, letters...) to several other students several times. Feedback is given each time about what the listener likes, feels is lacking, or fails to understand. And in the process, students hear many other pieces of writing that may influence them.

THE EASY MARRIAGE OF POETRY AND WORD PROCESSING

Students like to see their poems published. Since poems are short, even students with limited time at the word processor can produce a finished product. An illustrated anthology of student poems from an entire class will usually require less than ten pages. This means that each student in the class can receive a copy, and copies can go to the library. All of this for less than a ream of paper. ■

ONE COMPUTER IN A CLASSROOM:
Is it Educationally "Worth it?"

Jon Madian and Karen Jostad

The Writing Center

Many teachers have excellent success using one computer as part of a learning or writing center. There are a number of ways you can schedule student use of the center: Students may go to the writing center on a rotating basis, a sign-up sheet may be used, or you may elect to have students use the center when they have completed their other work.

Writing with Revision and Publication in Mind

Poetry Writing

Although there are lots of possibilities for activities that can be done with one computer, some teachers prefer to emphasize writing that can be revised and published. During the first week or two of school, for example, students may begin by writing acrostic poems using their names. This activity may then be followed by exploring a whole range of poetry forms.

Peer Feedback

Usually when a whole class is doing a specific form of writing, the computer is left on and everyone writes in one file. In this way, students can scroll through their classmates' writings. This helps students get ideas. It also enables them to react thoughtfully to their classmates' poems or other writings by writing comments below it, praising and/or making suggestions to the author. Peer feedback motivates students to look back through the file of class writings and stimulates revision.

Cumulative Poems or Stories

A variation on individual poetry or story writing is to have students write cumulative poems or stories. After one student has written a line, couplet, or stanza, the next student adds his or her ideas. When everyone has contributed, either small writing groups or the entire class can work together in revising and editing the piece.

Setting Up a Class Bulletin Board

A single computer can also be used like a bulletin board. Students may want to have codes for their names, or they may elect to use their own names. Students then write letters to each other and create files to discuss topics of interest. To locate "mail," students simply search the appropriate file for their name or code.

As the teacher, you can use the bulletin board to write notes to absent students. When they return to class, they can bring up their individual files and find information on missed assignments, a welcome back greeting, etc.

Unfortunately, with the recent emphasis on writing labs, the "one computer in a classroom" scenario is often overlooked—even though many schools do not have access to a writing lab for students. Can you really create an effective writing program in your classroom using one computer? The answer is YES!

Cooperative Learning Groups

Single computers work well with cooperative learning groups. You may want to use a rotating schedule, giving each group time on the computer for each phase in the development of a writing assignment.

For example, a group may be assigned time at the computer to do brainstorming during the Prewrite stage. During the Write stage, they will actually compose as a group, printing out their draft for close review by each member of the group. The group will come back together with their edited printouts for the Rewrite/Edit stage. A spell checker can be used when students are ready to work on their final draft. Time for special formatting and layout work should be assigned before students print out the final draft for sharing with the class at the Publishing stage. There are a number of good software programs for publishing that will import many of the files created by word processors and allow students to design attractive pages for their books.

20

Liquid Crystal Display

When a Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) is added to a single computer, the computer becomes an electronic blackboard that enables everyone in the class to participate. An entire class can compose and revise a piece of writing so that the *process* of writing is modeled while everyone participates.

If small cooperative writing groups are used, let the entire class watch one group composing a piece. Encourage them to take notes on how the group is doing and how their piece of writing evolves and to discuss as a group the process and resulting product. You will find that this experience tends to make students more sophisticated when working in their small groups.

One Computer as a Teacher Tool

One computer can be used by a teacher to produce worksheets and overhead transparencies. For example, say that you've made an assignment to your students. They've composed, responded, revised, and edited. You now read their work and find some reoccurring problems such as passive verb constructions, dangling participles, and unclear organization.

You can now sit down at the computer and compose a parody of their papers that humorously exaggerates their mistakes. The next day in class, explain that you found this paper without a name on it and wondered who wrote it. Of course, no one will volunteer. You then suggest that it might be good practice to revise and edit this piece, so you give a copy to each student. They can work individually and then with partners and perhaps in small groups, revising and editing.

Finally, you use the overhead projector with the LCD, or simply with a transparency if an LCD isn't available, and work through the piece as a class. If you like, you can also load the original piece of parody into the computer and have small groups of students apply what they have learned. If you're lucky enough to have a lab or a cluster of computers that can be wheeled into the class, individuals, pairs, or small groups of students can all take a shot at revising and editing the piece on the computer. If you wait about a week between the time you model and the time they work on their own, you'll get a good sense of how well they've retained the strategies that were demonstrated.

The benefits of one computer in a classroom should not be overlooked. Lab settings are excellent for many purposes, but remember: With a little planning, that computer sitting in the back of your room can become an integral part of your classroom curriculum. ■

[Jon Madian and Karen Jostad, Humanities Software, PO Box 1064, Hood River, OR 97031.]

One Computer in the K-8 Classroom

Cathy Gunn

Many teachers have access to computers that they share with others. Sometimes these computers are on carts and can be wheeled into classrooms when needed. This creates a problem, since most software available to teachers is designed for one or two users at a time, and it creates a terrific management problem for the teacher.

If you have access to one computer, there are many ways of incorporating the computer into an existing classroom curriculum. A large screen monitor—either a VCR monitor or a TV screen—turns the computer into an inexpensive demonstration tool that allows all students to work collectively and collaboratively.

The large screen monitor can be connected to the computer with cables that split the video output. With this arrangement, anything that is on the computer screen can be seen by the entire class.

Software Introduction

Before introducing a software program that students will be using on their own or in small groups, demonstrate the software. The large screen monitor permits group introduction.

Large group demonstrations are particularly effective when introducing problem solving or simulation software, word processing applications, or word processing techniques and commands.

Problem-Solving/ Simulation Software

Problem-solving software can help the teacher to involve the entire class in stimulating discussions, with the software serving as a spark, giving students new situations to analyze and decisions to make.

Simulations provide activities that students would not ordinarily be involved in due to the complex nature of the activity or the amount of time, money, or risk involved in carrying out the activity for real. Software programs such as ***Oregon Trail*** (MECC), ***The Factory*** (Sunburst), ***TimeLiner*** (Tom Snyder), and ***Canoe Race*** (public domain) all work well with one computer and a large group of students. Good software simulations or problem-solving programs engage students in collecting and interpreting information, debating, and developing critical thinking skills. An added benefit is that students are able to develop social skills involved in cooperative decision making as they become actively involved in collecting and interpreting data.

Word Processing

Use a large screen monitor and a computer to demonstrate the uses of a word processor, and then incorporate word processing into your existing curriculum. Word processors that work well with a large screen monitor have 40 column capabilities, which allow larger print to be seen on the screen. ***Magic Slate***(Sunburst), ***Bank Street Writer III*** (Scholastic) and ***FrEdWriter*** (public domain) all work well for group demonstrations. The ***Write On!*** literature collection from Humanities Software contains many language arts activities that can be used with one computer in the classroom and are available for many word processors. These include grade levels from primary to high school, as well as special education versions.

Word Processing Activities

Grades K-3

• Use the word processor to type students' collective language experience stories, which can be printed out for students and then read. It is especially effective to include students' names with their contributions. For example, "'We are studying about animals in science, ' said John." "'Animals hibernate in winter,' said Susan."

• List spelling words as a group. Talk about spelling, how to remember patterns, and write the words in a sentence.

• Language arts activities that are part of an assignment such as synonyms, antonyms, filling in blanks in sentences, word parts, and lists of nouns can be done on screen.

• Math facts: Facts can be typed in before class time and then answers typed in as students give the answers.

• Writing group poetry. Work with a language pattern the students have been studying such as "ag," "at," or "og." Students can write chants, with all students having an opportunity to participate. Poems can be printed out and read by the students. An excellent source for these kinds of activities are the ***Write On!*** literature collection from Humanities Software.

Grades 3-8

• Experience stories: Students can begin a collective story and continue adding to the story orally, with the teacher typing in the story. These can be saved with chapters added periodically.

• Group science lab reports: What procedures did we use in our science experiment today? What were the results? What are your reactions to this experiment? Could you predict the results? Why do you think this happened? are questions that can be answered by the group and typed on the screen.

• Create study guides, with students reviewing concepts and facts. The teacher can type in the students' review statements, which will result in a study guide for tests.

• Demonstrate combining sentences, substituting descriptive words, changing meaning, etc. ■

[Cathy Gunn, Field Representative, Technology Unit of the Central Illinois Educational Service Center #14, Springfield, IL]

A SURVEY OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD WORD PROCESSING

Keith Wetzel

Do students prefer writing with a word processor to writing with paper and pencil? Do students prefer to use the word processor for part of their writing, but not all? Over the past two years I have explored these word processing issues as they relate to process writing.

In this study, process writing lessons begin with a prewriting activity such as a discussion or the viewing of a film. After gathering ideas, students write a first draft (quick write). Authors read their drafts aloud to peers and/or the teacher, and the listeners give the authors feedback about their ideas. Using the feedback, the authors then revise their work. At least one more draft follows in which the authors focus on specific problems such as misspellings or sentence structure.

In order to assess student attitudes toward writing, I surveyed a fourth grade class that had begun process writing using word processors a year earlier. As fourth graders the students received 15 hours of structured keyboarding instruction during the first semester. In addition, instruction in process writing using a word processor that began in the third grade was continued throughout their entire fourth grade year. At the end of the school year, I administered an attitude survey to students to determine their attitudes toward word processing. The survey questions and the answers are listed in the table below.

1) Most often would you rather write with a

67%	A. word processor
33%	B. pencil

2) For your first draft (quick write) would you rather use a

46%	A. word processor
54%	B. pencil

3) Would you rather do your revising and editing with a

83%	A. word processor
17%	B. pencil

FINDINGS

I found that most students preferred to use a word processor for writing. Students thought revising and editing tasks were well suited to the word processor. However, most preferred to write an initial draft with a pencil.

These preferences may be linked to keyboarding proficiency. In an earlier study I investigated whether the keyboarding proficiency of third, fourth, and fifth graders influenced the quality of their essays. One hundred students received approximately one hour of keyboard familiarity instruction, followed by 10 weeks of instruction in word processing and process writing. The students wrote holistically scored essays before and after the 10 weeks of instruction. I found that students who were more proficient typists wrote significantly better essays.

Students were asked to elaborate on their reasons for selecting their answers to the above questions.

First Draft

Reasons given by students who preferred pencil to write the first draft included:

"Your first draft is easier (with pencil)...and when you are finished you can revise and edit it on the computer."

"You can write neater."

"It's faster."

Reasons given by students who preferred the word processor for writing the first draft included:

"It would look neat."

"I like it."

"It is easier."

"You can read the writing easier."

"Neater."

The majority of students who preferred the pencil for the first draft said the pencil was faster for them. Students who preferred the word processor for the first draft said that it was neater or easier to read.

Revising and Editing

Students who preferred a pencil for revising and editing were asked why. All of these students said that the pencil was faster for revising. Those selecting the word processor for revising and editing gave more varied answers:

"Revising and editing is faster with the word processor, and is slower with paper and pencil."

"You can erase by pushing delete, and it's neater, and you can rearrange paragraphs or sentences by pushing some buttons."

"Because it's simpler with a word processor."

"So I can proofread it faster."

"It looks better."

"It is easier to correct."

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

One goal of using a word processor in writing is to make the writing task easier. A word processor should be used if it helps to accomplish this goal. However, the survey suggests that word processing helps students differentially.

A simple majority of the fourth grade students reported that the word processor was less helpful at the first draft stage. For these students, the word processor may not help them record their thoughts fluently. In spite of the 15 hours of keyboarding instruction, I found that students generally did not write as quickly using a keyboard as they did with pencil. This is particularly important because the teacher emphasized fluency in writing—for example, the quick write strategy.

The writing tool can also influence the ease of revision and editing. After receiving feedback on a piece of writing, the author revises it for meaning and clarity. These students inserted and deleted text to revise and edit their pieces of writing. Students believe that the word processor does not require the recopying time that rewriting with pencil requires. Indeed, it is easier, faster, and neater for a large majority of students to use a word processor to revise and edit.

NEW QUESTIONS

There are many questions still to be answered. How long does it take for students to become as comfortable with word processing as with pencil? If students started keyboarding instruction earlier, would they become more proficient typists in less time? If they started keyboarding later, would they become proficient typists more quickly? Do students who type as quickly as they write with pencil prefer word processing to pencil for their first draft? Is the word processor a more valuable tool for teachers and students who place a higher emphasis on revising and editing? Is there a relationship between the tool the student uses, revision, and quality of writing?

IMPLICATIONS

In closing, a word of caution is in order. This study involves a very specific set of conditions that include a certain amount of keyboarding instruction and a process writing approach. In addition, the data was collected from one fourth grade class of 23 students. The results should be applied to other situations with care. With that preface, some recommended practices follow.

Not every student prefers the same mode of writing (pencil or word processor). Less obvious is that for some students the word processor is more desirable at different stages of writing. I believe that educators should be sensitive to students' needs and preferences. Depending on the circumstances, the teacher may take different courses of action with students who are reluctant to use a word processor for writing. For example, the teacher might ask an aide or a parent to type in the first draft for each student (exactly the way each student wrote the draft with pencil). Students then may use the word processor for revising and editing. Alternately, if the teacher determines that more typing skill is worth the investment of time, sufficient additional time for students who are slower typists to practice their typing skills might be allowed. Finally, the teacher may give students a choice of writing tools. ■

DESIGNING A WRITING LAB

Bernajean Porter

Congratulations! You've been chosen to design a writing lab using computers!

It's going to be an exciting, adventurous challenge! There are many ways to design an effective lab. Ideas offered here are suggestions to consider as you begin.

"Old wine in new bottles" still gives you "old wine." Word processing with computers offers dynamic support for the whole writing process. However, just moving equipment and software into your building will not change existing writing instruction attitudes and practices. While word processing can be a powerful tool, it is unlikely that efforts to plan an effective writing program using computers will realize its potential unless there is simultaneously a paradigm shift to the process approach in writing instruction. Plan for adequate staff development throughout the content areas with continuous coaching and support for teachers to make meaningful connections between process writing and computers.

"To keyboard or not to keyboard" is the question in curriculum today. The *key* goal for students should be writing, not keyboarding. Although keyboarding is important, there may not be sufficient time for a keyboarding curriculum. Research indicates 20 to 30 hours of instruction is needed in a short, condensed amount of time for middle school students to develop and retain 20-25 wpm. If machine time is limited, it is highly recommended *not* to use up computer time teaching keyboarding while leaving little opportunity to actually write. Touch typing is a fundamental skill if students are doing frequent and repeated amounts of input such as word processing several times a week. If students are randomly using computers for writing, it is not the time for keyboarding. Keep assignments on the computer short to minimize input. Try poetry, group writing, advertising ads, letter writing, or paragraph development.

A Wish List For Equipment

- Plan to have enough computers for 50% of the largest class. Cooperative learning techniques are valuable in writing classrooms. Writing has many tasks other than encoding for groups who are off-line such as reading literature, journaling, sharing and conferencing, and publishing. Also plan for additional computers in high access areas such as media centers or for take-home programs that allow computer writing opportunities beyond the classroom.

- Apple II's with 128K allow for the greatest availability of software, while the Macintosh supports the most productive desktop publishing environment for all ages. Create clusters of both if possible at lower grade levels. Use the Macintosh at the junior high/senior high level.

- A mouse added to machines will ease composing and graphics creation.

- All computers need printer access! Hard copies or printouts are important throughout the process. The "Q-Card" from Sequential Systems networks four computers to a printer without a switch box. A "Print-It" or "Fingerprint" interface card allows young students to print whatever is on the screen with one or two keystrokes. Color printing is not just a luxury— it may be an important part of the message.

- An LCD Transparency (Vivid from Sunburst or Magna-Byte from Telex or MECC) can be plugged into a computer monitor port and placed on top of an overhead to project a large screen view of software. This allows teacher-directed activities and whole class writing experiences.

A Suggested List For Software

There is a plethora of software on the market: Begin slowly. ***FrEdWriter***, a public domain word processor, or MECC writing products can give a lab an inexpensive start. A word processor with a spelling checker is adequate in the beginning. Later, add one or two word processors, keyboarding software, graphic software, a data base, idea processing software, rewriting software, and publishing tool software. Create or purchase data disks of activities. Price lab packages and site licensing. A special note: Communication skills involve more than print messages. Select software for graphic communication at all levels. A sample lab software order might look like this:

Grades K-2

- Apple's ***Early Learning Series***, complete with training and curriculum management.

- ***Kermit's Electronic Storymaker*** (Simon and Schuster).
- ***Tonk in the Land of Buddy-Bot*** (Mindscape).
- ***Print Shop*** (Broderbund). Use as a publishing tool.
- ***Superprint*** (Scholastic). Use as a writing and publishing tool.

Grades 3-6

- ***Bank Street Writer III*** (Scholastic). Use as a main word processor. It allows 20-40-80 column and contains a spelling checker.
- ***MultiScribe*** (Scholastic). Use as a desktop publishing word processor with graphics, fonts, varied letter heights, and special formatting. ***Bank Street Writer*** files can be used.
- ***Bank Street Filer*** (Sunburst). Create data disks of addresses for letter writing or research projects.
- ***Newsroom*** or ***Publisher*** (Springboard). Use for newspaper publishing.
- ***Author-Author*** (Mindplay). It allows play writing.
- ***Create with Garfield*** (DLM). Use for graphics and text.
- ***Bank Street Storybook*** (Mindscape). It combines graphic and text.
- ***Mouse Paint*** or ***Dazzle Draw*** (Broderbund). It provides an open graphic environment.
- ***Electronic Mailbag*** (Exsym). This is a simulation for electronic mail.
- ***Crossword Magic*** (Mindscape).
- ***Print Shop*** (Broderbund). Use as a publishing tool.
- ***Superprint*** (Scholastic). Use as a writing and publishing tool.
- ***Poetry Express*** (Mindscape). Use as idea processor for poetry.
- ***Write-On!*** (Humanities Software). Data disks of writing activities.

Grades 7-12

The Macintosh would serve best at this level. Schools with Apple IIs, however, might consider this sample software list:

- ***AppleWorks***. Use as a main word processor and data base.
- ***Pinpoint*** (Pinpoint Publisher). Contains desktop accessories for ***AppleWorks***.
- ***Sensible Speller***, Pro-Dos version, (Sensible Software).
- ***MultiScribe*** (Scholastic). Use as a desktop publishing word processor with graphics, fonts, varied letter heights, and special formatting. ***AppleWorks*** or ***FrEdWriter*** files can be used.
- ***Publisher*** (Springboard). Use for newspaper publishing.
- ***Writer's Helper*** (Conduit). It contains 22 programs for idea processing and rewriting.
- ***Crossword Magic*** (Mindscape).
- ***Print Shop*** (Broderbund). Use as a publishing tool.
- ***Superprint*** (Scholastic). Use as a writing and publishing tool.
- ***MIX*** (McGraw-Hill). Use this telecommunications subscription to link students to real world writing. Forty-two conference boards for students for writing, pen pals, and debates.
- ***Write-On!*** (Humanities Software). Data disks of writing activities.

A Wish List For Macintosh Software

- ***Works*** (Microsoft). Use as a main word processor and database.
- ***MacProof*** (ALPS). Use for rewriting directly in ***Works***.
- ***Calliope*** (Innovision). It is a dynamic idea processor for right brain planning.
- ***More*** (Living VideoText). It is an outlining program.
- ***Super Paint*** (Silicon Beach). Use to create graphics.
- ***Print Shop*** (Broderbund). Use as a publishing tool.
- ***Ready-Set-Go*** (Manhattan Graphics). A desktop publishing tool for documents, publications, and newspapers.

Organize the writing lab for a writing community. Create multiple work spaces. Arrange a Word Processing Center (leave generous space for collaborative work); a Publishing Center; a Reference Center (supplies, software, reference and published books); and a Conferencing/Sharing Center. Add a Quiet Zone that also doubles for an instructional area. Create writing folders or notebooks for ongoing and completed student work. Establish routines for entering, working in, and leaving the lab to allow maximum student independence. Designate "navigators" to help other students with computer and software questions. Keep "computer-use logs" to monitor machine usage. Order lots of paper, ribbons, and disks!

In today's fast-moving technological society, it is important to produce thinkers and learners who have the tools for gathering, processing, and communicating information. The writing lab you create with computers offers writers an exciting journey into the information age.

HAZELWOOD WEST WRITING LAB: A Center of Excellence

Anne Wright

> Is your present tense? Compose yourself in the Writing Lab.

So reads the sign outside the door of the Writing Lab at Hazelwood West. In the three years since the Writing Lab opened, hundreds of students have come here to "compose" themselves. The Writing Lab, instituted in the fall of 1983 at Hazelwood West High School, St. Louis County, MO, is staffed by two English teachers who work in the lab three hours each and teach two classes in composition. We also have a full-time teacher assistant. West's Writing Lab was designated by NCTE as a National Center of Excellence in November 1985. We think the success of our lab is due to a number of factors that make it unique.

First, we have a philosophy that governs all our activities. We believe that all students have a wealth of experiences to write about and that they are capable of writing about them, given the attention they need to get started. Therefore, the most important purpose of our Writing Lab is to provide the individual attention that classroom teachers do not have the time to provide. We know from student response that the one-to-one instruction and encouragement they receive in the Lab is the reason many of them come back time after time. One student said to a newspaper reporter who was at school interviewing the lab staff about our success, "No one has to worry about a writing assignment any more, because the kids all know they can go to the Writing Lab for help if they get stuck. The Writing Lab has revolutionized our school!" Honestly, we didn't pay that boy, and we had no idea he was going to give us such an endorsement, but I think he was expressing the attitude many students have about the value of the Writing Lab.

Second, the staff provides a wide range of services to students and teachers. Although our schedule is set up on a teacher-referral basis, many students come in on their own initiative, now that they know all the services available in the Writing Lab. We help students brainstorm ideas, revise papers, edit papers, write research papers on a word processing program Apple Writer, compose resumes, prepare college applications, polish essays for scholarship applications, and plan speeches. In other words, they can get help with any writing problem.

The lab also serves as a center for writing contests. We post all contest announcements and frequently run announcements in the daily bulletin. Students are encouraged in their English classes to enter contests, but the classroom teacher does not have to worry about the endless details of deadlines and contest requirements. We help the students edit their papers, and we print all final copies on a letter quality printer. During the three years we have been in operation, a number of students have won contests and some have had pieces published. One tenth grader who won a Veterans Day essay contest received a $300 savings bond and was invited to join the mayor of St. Louis and the Lt. Governor of Missouri on the reviewing stand for the Veterans Day parade. Last year, two of our juniors had papers chosen for publishing in *Missouri Youth Writes*, a publication of the Missouri Association of Teachers of English. A deaf student wrote a paper about deaf people following "normal" occupations. We entered his paper in the journalism contest sponsored by the Governor's Committee for Employment of the Handicapped and in the Southeast Missouri State University Writing Contest. He won second place in both and was invited to the state capital to a banquet, where he received a $100. bond. These kinds of experiences increase a student's self-confidence and inspire other students.

Another activity, initiated in the spring of 1985, is the publishing of a literary magazine for the school. The staff did all the editing and layout the first year, but this year, under the sponsorship of a lab staff member, a Writing Club was founded. The major activity of the club is to publish the literary magazine. In its first year we had no idea how successful such a publication would be. We knew we wanted a wide representation and a low price. Our principal said it could be underwritten the first year by student activity funds and suggested that we only order 300 copies (we have a school population of 1600). We sold them for $1.00 per copy, which was slightly under cost, and we were elated when the 300 sold out the second day they were on sale! The principal allowed us to order a second printing of 100, which we also sold.

We do not reject any writing turned in for the literary magazine. We make editorial suggestions and ask the students to revise. All students who revise their papers and return them to us have their work published. We believe it is far more important to publish the work of as many students as possible than to present only a select few of the highest quality.

We also invite teachers and other staff members in the building to submit work for the literary magazine. Last year, 11 teachers were published. We believe that this example encourages students. It lets them know that teachers write and that they consider this publication worthwhile. We know the students enjoyed the teachers' poems, stories, and essays as much as those of other students.

Word processing on Apple IIe computers is another activity that goes on almost constantly in our Writing Lab. We started with one computer and have gradually increased the number to 25. Many students who come for assistance in writing want to write their papers on the word processor before they leave. Others, especially from journalism classes, come specifically to use the computers. Students who have used word processing once almost always return to write other papers on the computer.

Many of the activities described for students are also open to teachers (individual assistance and contests, in particular), but we also provide some services specifically for teachers. The lab has a comprehensive library on teaching writing to which we add new publications each year. These publications include many published by NCTE and several authored or co-authored by National Writing Project Fellows. We also prominently display the *National Writing Project Newsletter*. We encourage teachers to check out these books and periodicals for use in planning their writing assignments. Sometimes I make posters to put in the department center highlighting a "Book of the Month."

Teachers may also bring whole classes to the Writing Lab to use the computers for a writing assignment. When they do, the staff reserves the Apple computer room, which has 22 Apple IIs, for their use for as many days as the teacher requests. We have a separate room where we have staff desks, the professional library, student resources and two computers. We can continue our tutoring functions there while the classroom teacher conducts class in the Apple Lab.

We also keep one computer, monitor and disk drive on a portable cart so that teachers can take them to their classroom. Included with this set-up is a large (25") screen monitor on another cart. With this combination teachers can type on the computer, watching what they are doing on the small monitor, while the class can watch the large monitor. This is the best way I have found to actually demonstrate certain kinds of writing skills to students; I have found this method especially useful for teaching revision and synthesizing skills.

We also offer to teach teachers how to use the computers for word processing. They can come in during their planning and conference periods for instruction. Those who have learned how to do word processing are true converts; they keep coming back and they also send more students. We are currently seeking a grant under Missouri's recently passed Excellence in Education Act to conduct a two-week workshop for teachers in the Language Arts Department. Our goal is to help teachers understand how computers can be useful tools in the teaching of writing.

Teachers from other departments are also encouraged to use the Writing Lab. They may ask staff members to come to their classes to teach students how to write a particular paper, or they may send individual students to the lab for help. English teachers are given priority, but we have some social studies teachers and science teachers who send their students frequently and others who regularly invite one of the lab staff to come to their classes. One advanced biology teacher sends students to the lab to prepare the papers that must go with their Science Fair entries. Social studies teachers frequently ask one of the lab staff to come to their classroom to teach students how to take essay tests, write an editorial, or prepare a bibliography for a paper. Last semester I met with the social studies teachers in one of their after-school department meetings to explain to them what kinds of writing English teachers emphasize at each grade level, so that their social studies assignments could be prepared with reasonable student expectations.

The Writing Lab at Hazelwood West has become what we like to call it—The Write Place. ■

Anne Wright is an instructor in the Hazelwood West High School Writing Lab and is Co-director of the Gateway Writing Project, St. Louis, Missouri.

[Reprinted by permission from The Quarterly of The National Writing Project, Vol. 8 #3, June 1986.]

How a 45-minute Writing Lab Works

Eleven classes use the Winter Garden Elementary School writing lab in Cerritos, CA, twice a week in 45-minute blocks. For the first 5 to 10 minutes, the teacher shares his or her own writing (e.g., topic choices, revision techniques). Sharing and modeling is an important characteristic of this school's program. The next 5 minutes is devoted to silent writing for everyone—the teacher, aides, and students. For the next 20 minutes, students continue to write and the teacher circulates, giving quick responses to writing samples, topics, or specific problems. During the final 10 minutes, students read their writing and receive feedback from the teacher and from peers.

Peter Adams

Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing Centers

During the past seven years, the Writing Center at my school, Essex Community College, has grown from an all-volunteer operation that attracted 14 students for 21 visits in 1980-81 to a 30-hour per week, fully paid center that served 306 students for 3,103 visits in 1986-87. To accomplish this spectacular growth, we have had to solve a number of problems.

As a fairly large community college (10,000 full-time and part-time students) located in a blue-collar, racially mixed area east of Baltimore, Maryland, we have a large number of students in need of assistance with writing. At our writing center, students are tutored, watch videotapes, use word processors, take tests, and drink coffee. Much of our success has resulted from the diversity of our services.

1. Funding

Politicians who are looking for ways to cut budgets are fond of pointing out that we don't solve problems "by throwing money at them." In fact, many of the problems associated with establishing and maintaining a writing center could be solved rather easily if we had a little money to throw at them. Funding is one of the biggest problems most writing centers face. Money is needed for hiring tutors and staff, for producing handouts, for acquiring equipment, and for purchasing the essential lubricant, coffee.

Although every level of school and, indeed, every school has unique problems associated with funding, I am convinced that the most important quality needed by the administrator of a writing center in order to acquire funds is *persistence*. In large universities, small colleges, high schools, junior highs, and elementary schools, a writing center director who learns the budget process, who meets deadlines for various stages of budget approval, who understands the language necessary to support budget proposals, who learns how to make compromises with other constituencies, and who is willing to persist when a proposal runs into resistance will be able to generate the funding necessary to support most reasonable projects.

At Essex, this has meant putting together concrete figures on the financial support given to their writing centers by 17 other schools in the Baltimore area. It has meant being on campus every year in June when there is always some money left over that needs to be spent in the last few days before the end of the fiscal year. It has meant submitting a proposal for a full-time secretary for five consecutive years (we still have not succeeded with this one, although my Dean is well aware that I have been patient for all these years).

The problems encountered by any particular writing center will be unique to its situation, but the five problems discussed in this article: funding, publicity, staffing, services, and evaluation, are so basic and so endemic that every writing center will have to face them in one way or another.

Besides working within the normal budget process, there are several other sources of funds to support a writing center. Occasionally, it is possible to obtain a grant from a local business or corporation. While it is seldom done, it is also possible to charge students a fee for the use of the writing center. The major arguments against this approach are that a fee may discourage student use and will discriminate against poor students. Despite concerns about discouraging student use, charging a small fee may actually encourage use. It is a widespread reaction to feel that something that is free could not be worth much. This may influence the way students currently feel about the "free services" of a writing center. Charging a small fee might actually encourage students to value the services of the writing center more than they do now. We have not tried this approach, but we did give it serious consideration.

A small but useful source of funds is the coffee pot. No writing center should be without one for the atmospheric and morale benefits. In addition, it can produce a small amount of discretionary revenue. We charge 25 cents a cup and make a profit of about $100 per semester. I don't understand how this is possible, since we do not watch the "donations" very closely and we buy gourmet coffee. But the $200 a year is very handy for purchasing frills like a couple of dictionaries, posters, and some casual lamps.

2. Publicizing the Center

Once a writing center has solved its "cash flow" problems, the next most common problem how to get students to use the services of the writing center. A number of very well-staffed, well-equipped, and well-organized writing centers have floundered because few students used them.

Publicity, of course, is the primary answer to this problem. But publicity should be aimed at two different audiences: students and faculty. To let students know we exist, we have developed posters; free bookmarks with our phone number and hours have been placed in the bookstore and library; and the school paper has done an article every time we have made an additional step in our development (e.g., when we acquired our first 15 computers).

One of our most successful efforts has been an orientation for all business writing sections at the beginning of every semester. Classes come over for one class period each semester during which we explain the services of the writing center and conduct a diagnostic grammar test. As a result of this testing, students frequently come back for tutoring, either on their own or because their instructors have referred them.

We also work hard to build support for the writing center among faculty. Every semester we send a letter to all faculty announcing our services and our hours. Over the years we have also built up a cadre of faculty who refer students regularly. We correspond with these faculty, thanking them for their support and updating them on developments in the writing center. We are also assiduous in communicating with faculty who refer students; every two weeks faculty who refer students receive a memo reporting how many times the students they have referred have been to the writing center and what they have been working on. Finally, we sponsor open houses and grammar trivia contests to get faculty to stop by and visit.

3. Staffing the Center

Another problem area in many writing centers is staffing—how to make sure good people work in the writing center. Most college level centers rely heavily on student tutors. There is much evidence demonstrating the efficacy of peer tutors, and they certainly are easy on the budget. However, at a community college where students are in two-year programs, where there are no English majors, and where many students are very weak writers, it seems to us unwise to attempt to identify and train student tutors. We have succeeded in convincing the administration to provide compensation for faculty tutors. Our tutors work 2 hours in the writing center for 1 hour of teaching compensation; 6 hours per week is the equivalent of a three-credit course. Since there are no preparations and no papers to take home, this is a reasonable rate of compensation. These faculty tutors work with three students in an hour.

4. Writing Center Services

Another problem, but a much more pleasant one, is deciding just what services a writing center will offer. I recommend the broadest possible range of services, anything that will help students become better writers. A writing center might offer any of the following services:

- Tutoring
- Video tapes and audio tapes
- Computers for word processing and for CAI
- Testing, particularly makeup tests for writing instructors
- Reference tools: dictionaries, thesauruses, handbooks
- Exercise collections
- Textbook collections
- Workshops on common writing problems
- Typewriters
- Help with resumes
- Instruction in word processing
- Support groups on writing anxiety

5. Evaluation

The final problem common to many writing centers is the problem of convincing others, usually the administration, of the efficacy and cost effectiveness of the writing center. Ideally, a writing center should strive to demonstrate that the funds spent on its operation result in significantly improved retention and performance by students. Since this is difficult to demonstrate, at the least a writing center should be prepared to demonstrate that increased resources are resulting in increased use by students. Convincing records are necessary to show how much use there is and, if possible, how many students come back for repeat visits, thus establishing that students are convinced that the writing center helps. A student evaluation form mailed to students each semester will produce results that will be surprisingly helpful in improving the writing center, while also demonstrating to others that the services are helpful.

Of course, the problems encountered by any particular writing center at a particular school will be unique to its situation, but the five problems identified in this article are so basic and so endemic that every writing center will have to face them in one way or another. ■

[Peter Adams, English Department, Essex Community College, Baltimore, MD 21237.]

A Model High School Writing Lab:

An Interview with Barbara Smigala

St. Louis Park High School, St. Louis Park, Minnesota

"We do not write in order to be understood; we write in order to understand."

C.D. Lewis

We had the good fortune to visit Barbara Smigala's writing program this past fall. It was one of the most exciting programs we've seen and we took the opportunity to interview Barbara.

Barbara, you've been teaching writing for 30 years. What led you to design a computer supported, cooperative writing program based upon four components: literature, cooperative grouping, process writing, and word processing?

Every teacher continues to look for methods that will help students become as successful as they can in whatever skills are important in that discipline. Two things combined to turn me to the program I now use:

First, the language arts department was given 25 computers to use for a year with the understanding that if we used them successfully we might be allowed to keep them. Second, I was given a grant that freed me from teaching for one period each semester to work on developing methods to help students write better.

After hearing about the success Roger Johnson and David Johnson were having with cooperative learning at the University of Minnesota, I decided to see how process writing and computer use could be combined with cooperative learning techniques. Computer use and cooperative learning seem naturally linked, since students tend to help each other while using computers. What better time to channel that help then by teaching them techniques to collaborate more effectively?

What grade levels of students are currently involved? Do the methods need to be adapted for different levels?

The range of grades and abilities vary greatly. For instance, they can be used in an 11th grade American Literature class, but I am going to Sioux Falls to give a workshop on Cooperative Writing to a group of English teachers in grades 7-9. The theory remains the same. It is simply adjusted to the ability and age of the student.

What follows is my method for combining both the technology of the computer with what we presently know of process writing to improve student writing. This does not mean that teachers will have to spend any less time grading and commenting on student papers. What it does mean, however, is first, that with the use of computers, students will be able to have grammar and spelling errors pointed out using software programs such as *Webster's Spelling Checker* and *Sensible Grammar*, so teachers should not have to spend their time pointing out these errors.

Second, students will write **many** drafts of a paper instead of the one they would have written if done by hand. Each draft may have any number of revisions made quickly and painlessly because of the capabilities of the computer. Put simply, if a paper were put on a continuum from *horrendous* to *work of art*, each time a student made revisions, the paper would move up the continuum toward becoming a work of art. When the teacher finally sees the paper, it will be at stage 6 instead of 4, where it would have stayed with only one draft.

In addition, instead of stopping to mark grammar and spelling errors, the teacher will be able to make comments on higher level thinking skills, because students will have been practicing thinking skills as they read and comment on their partner's paper and revise their own.

You feel that "bonding" in writing pairs is very important. How do you define and facilitate bonding? Do you have pairs of students who won't bond?

Students often cannot see errors in their own writing, but can point out those same errors in the writing of others. Because of this, students are assigned partners and are responsible for helping that person make revisions and edit each paper. The pairing is made for a semester to enable both students to become so aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses that suggestions can be made with greater ease. The most important reason for the length of pairing time, however, is so that students will be "bonded." They will come to care about their partner's papers and to think of themselves as partially responsible for the successes and failures of those papers. This can only be achieved over a period of time.

Bonding begins artificially. Here is one method used to achieve it: When a polished paper is handed in, a number of

things accompany it:

1. Every rough draft must be turned in, each containing the partner's comments and suggestions.
2. Partners' papers are stapled separately but paper-clipped together so they are read together.
3. Teacher comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the suggestions, addressed to the person who made them, are included.

Each person is given an individual grade, plus points for suggestions made on the rough drafts of the other. When the graded papers are returned, each student receives his or her partner's paper to read through first; then they read their own papers. This makes them aware of the part they played in helping to write their partner's paper and offers suggestions for improving their performance next time.

When partners do not bond, it is necessary to find out why. If the reason is because the pair do not "feel like it" and assume that by refusing they will be allowed to work individually, they are told that past experience has shown that students' work improves more if they help each other than if they work alone. A teacher might also decide to up the ante, making collaboration more worthwhile by increasing the number of points a students receives for doing it.

If the reason students don't bond is because they do not like each other, they are told that liking each other is not necessary. They are only being asked to work together, not marry each other.

If students do not bond because one or both of them have not done their work, it's important to remember that working individually might have resulted in the same outcome. Sometimes a change will occur if both students can be encouraged to complete a few short writing assignments together successfully. And sometimes nothing works.

You have your students work in pairs all semester long and these pairs sometimes join another pair to form a foursome. When and why do you go from pairs to a foursome? What other patterns have you tried?

Pairs join a foursome to get the perspective of two other viewpoints. They join the foursome only after they have handed in what they think is their polished paper. Two others read it, making comments. The author is allowed one more chance to revise. This shows students that no piece of work is ever finished. Every piece of work is just a work "in progress." The paper they hand in is the progress they have made on it to that point. In theory, one paper could be revised all semester and still not be completed.

Another method of revision is to have students hand in a polished paper on a Friday. On Monday, the paper is returned, either to the partner or to another person. (The time lapse is to allow the writer to gain some distance from the work.) The paper must be read and the strongest paragraph pointed out. ("Strongest" is written in the margin.) On a separate sheet of paper, the reasons for this are listed. (Note: Prior to this, the class would have discussed what makes a strong and weak paragraph.) Next, the weakest paragraph is pointed out, along with the reasons and suggestions for changes. The paper is then handed back to the author and the person is allowed to make whatever changes he or she wishes. Again, because the paper is on disk, revisions are easier to make, and it is possible to print out the revised paragraph only.

Essentially, students do not produce collaborative papers, but rather the partner acts as a sounding board and peer editor. Can you tell us more about how students provide feedback and what you feel the students gain from these peer supportive activities?

Having two students produce one paper is an extremely sophisticated task. For this reason, and because each student should have a chance to write about a topic as they see it, students help others in all stages of the writing process, but they write their own papers. For example, a foursome may collaborate as they brainstorm topics for a paper. If this is done at a computer, each student can then have a hard copy of the topics and can choose not just the topic but the focus of the topic as well.

The second step might be what I call "scripting." A form is given to students (see figure 1), and, as one student talks through a topic, the other partner writes down a kind of outline for it. As this is being done, suggestions for additions and changes can be made and a discussion of the topic ensues. On the left, the Script Sheet lists the techniques students should use, along with things they might say. On the right side of the form, they make the outline of their partner's paper as the two discuss it.

Next, partners sit at adjoining computers, so they can help each other during all stages of the writing process. There is always a discussion between the two students, and instant help is available to each.

A hard copy is printed at the end of each day at the computer; the partner checks it that night and makes suggestions for improvement. The next day the class begins with partners discussing these suggestions with each other.

SCRIPT SHEET I

STARTERS	
DO YOU HAVE A TOPIC?	
TELL ME ABOUT YOUR TOPIC.	
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO WRITE ABOUT?	
TELL ME SOME OF YOUR IDEAS.	
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN THINKING ABOUT FOR YOUR PAPER?	
WHAT ARE SOME KEY WORDS THAT APPLY TO YOUR TOPIC?	
TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT TO WRITE ABOUT AND I'LL HELP YOU WITH YOUR OUTLINE.	
BEFORE I START SCRIPTING, TELL ME IN A FEW WORDS WHAT YOU WILL WRITE ABOUT.	

SCRIPT SHEET II

PROMPT/CLARIFY	
TELL ME MORE.	
YES, AND. . .	
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?	
EXPLAIN THAT.	
NOD. SMILE.	
SUMMARIZE IDEAS	
PRAISE/ENCOURAGE	
GOOD IDEA.	
I LIKE THAT!	
TERRIFIC!	
WHAT ELSE CAN YOU SAY ABOUT THAT?	
WHAT ELSE WILL DEVELOP THAT?	
REVIEW/OUTLINE	

What are your thoughts on editing and revising?

It is extremely important in all editing and revising to show students how to edit and revise and what to edit for. Students have two edit sheets for each paper. One is a generic sheet with all the things they should be able to point out. This means that the generic edit sheet for 9th grade students is different from that of 11th grade students.

The generic editing sheet is used every time. I have found it most helpful to list editing points by turning them into questions. The answer to the question can then help the student know, for example, if a topic sentence supports the thesis and thus might be good.

The second revision sheet is for the specific writing skill taught before that assignment. If concrete nouns and vivid verbs were taught, students should be made to see if their partner did, in fact, use them. Problem words can be circled and can be spotted quickly for revision.

How do you evaluate each student's contribution to the process, separate from the product? And how do you evaluate the product?

Students are given a grade for their own paper, as well as for suggestions made on rough drafts. (There are usually at least three drafts per paper.) All drafts are handed in along with the final paper.

Students are sometimes asked to evaluate their partner's help through questions such as:

How much help did your partner give you on rough drafts? ___ Enough ___ I needed more

What did you learn from working on your partner's rough drafts?

Partners may also assign points for their own collaboration. For example, if told there are 20 total points for collaboration, they divide those points between them, giving reasons for the point distribution.

What is your ratio of students to computers? Do you have suggestions for teachers working with more students per computer?

Although there are not enough computers for each student to have one, the school has two other labs with computers. If other classes are not assigned to these labs, the overflow from an English class is allowed to use them.

Staggering the class assignments works well when there are not enough computers. Half of the class can be doing preliminary work such as working on a new writing skill for the next paper, brainstorming topics (four students can be at one computer), choosing a topic, and scripting it. Meanwhile, the other half of the class can be using the computers to write their papers.

Barbara, thank you for your time in sharing so much of your program with us. We hope you'll keep in touch.

Thank you for your interest in what I'm doing. I'm pleased that it will have a part in **The Writing Notebook.** ■

[Barbara Smigala, St. Louis Park High School, 6425 W. 33rd St., St. Louis Park, MN 55426.]

Lab Tips

from Ted Detjen

Reprinted with permission from ***MicroNews****, a newsletter from Mid-Hudson Regional Microcomputer Support Service, New Paltz, NY.*

We have been fortunate to have been included in the planning stages of many of the microcomputer labs in our area schools. Here are some ideas that have worked well:

1. Consider placing the micros along the periphery of the room. Teachers will be able to see all of the students' screens and be able to pivot around at a moment's notice and get to a student who needs help.

2. Allow about four feet of space per student. You will be surprised how fast that space is used up by printers, student books, and notebooks.

3. Place some tables or desks and chairs in the middle of the room for students to work on when they are not at their computers.

4. Allow four electrical sockets per student station and make sure you have an electrician install several circuits in the room. Install the outlets at a level above the surface of the computer table. Install a switch or switches by the door, which will shut off all the devices in the room.

5. Install a good lock on the door. Cover the glass in the door with a curtain. Make sure the shades on the windows can be fully closed. Consider installing an alarm system.

6. Purchase a lockable cabinet in which to secure certain materials. Install cabinets or shelving above the student stations. Replace the blackboard with a chalkless whiteboard.

7. Consider hiring a teacher or teacher aide to be in the room, so that this valuable resource can be used for structured classes as well as study halls.

Connecting Literature with Writing at the Intermediate and Secondary Level

Karen Jostad

Imitation is often a very good method for learning. Writers read other writers, not just for content, but for style and structure. In Shakespeare's time, students actually copied word for word the writings of successful authors with the hope that they would acquire skills in this manner. As teachers we can sometimes detect traits of an author's style in our students' writing after they have read stories or poems by that author. Rather than impeding the development of a student's own narrative voice, this kind of imitation actually helps their development as writers.

Word processing provides a wonderfully flexible medium for writing lessons designed to teach through imitation and modeling. As an author of intermediate and secondary level word processing writing activities for the Write On! library, I've rediscovered this instructional strategy by using excerpted material from authors students are reading. These passages are put on a word processor data diskette (the Write On! data diskette) along with student activities that involve the student with the author's language, structure, and style. If students are working with an author's use of metaphor, point of view, or descriptive language, they are given structured activities to teach that objective, and then they are asked to apply what they have learned in an open-ended creative writing activity. Thus, students achieve specific writing objectives while using authors as models for their own writing.

This is a strategy you can apply yourself. The following six activities, taken from the Write On! library, illustrate some effective ways to use excerpted material. You may be able to adapt these ideas to material of your own choice, and you may think of other ways to use this strategy. If so, I would like to hear from you!

1. Using Descriptive Language

Students are directed to read the passage from *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle describing Meg's first encounter with the IT.

"As she continued to step slowly forward, at last she realized what the Thing on the dais was.

IT was a brain.

A disembodied brain. An oversized brain, just enough larger than normal to be completely revolting and terrifying. A living brain. A brain that pulsed and quivered, that seized and commanded. No wonder the brain was called IT. IT was the most horrible, the most repellent thing she had ever seen, far more nauseating than anything she had ever imagined with her conscious mind, or that had ever tormented her in her most terrible nightmares."

"As teachers we can sometimes detect traits of an author's style in our students' writing after they have read stories or poems by that author. Rather than impeding the development of a student's own narrative voice, this kind of imitation actually helps their development as writers."

After reading the passage, students are to type in a description of how it made them feel. The next step on the activity file is to change the descriptive language in the passage to alter the feeling created in the original passage. First they try to eliminate the effectiveness of the passage by deleting descriptive language so the IT instead becomes appealing, friendly, beautiful. Finally, students are given a word bank of descriptive terms used by L'Engle and asked to write their own paragraph describing something repulsive to them. By approaching the same passage from several different angles, students have lots of opportunity to play with the language and structures used by L'Engle to create this beautifully written description. Thus, when they write their own passage, we would hope to see some modeling of L'Engle's style.

(from *Observe and Describe*, Humanities Software # I-243)

2. Combining Sentences

Sentence combining activities can be constructed from material students are reading. The passage that follows was

rewritten from *The Other Side of the Mountain* by Jean George. Students are instructed to tighten up the language by following these steps:

1. Combine sentences.
2. Eliminate unnecessary words.
3. Get rid of repeated thoughts.

I had made my hemlock bed right in the stream valley. It was in a place where the wind drained down from the mountaintop. The mountaintop was cold and so the wind was cold. It might have been all right if I had made it on the other side of the boulder. But I made it on the wrong side of the boulder. I was right on the main highway of the cold winds. These cold winds tore down upon the valley below. I didn't have enough hemlock boughs under me. My stomach was cold and damp even before I lay my head down. I took some boughs off the roof and stuffed them under me. After putting the boughs under me my shoulders were cold. I curled up in a ball. I was almost asleep. Then a whippoorwill call awakened me. If you have ever been within forty feet of a whippoorwill, you will understand. It was so loud I couldn't even shut my eyes. They are deafening!

Students then are given George's original passage to compare with their own and are asked to continue to revise and edit if there are additional changes they want to make. Always, students are directed to treat the original author's material, not as an answer key, but as a reference.

(from *Paragraphs 7*, Humanities Software # I-214)

3. Using Helping Verbs

Helping verbs are overused by professional as well as student writers. By selecting existing text and or modifying passages, students can revise and edit for helping verbs. In the following modified section of text from *The Door in the Wall* by Marguerite de Angeli, students find and replace helping verbs such as IS, ARE, WAS, and WERE with more colorful, descriptive language.

For the most part the road was low among the hills. It was winding in and out, following the river. A heavy mist was over the valley so thick it was like a white blanket which parted only enough for the next step to be seen, then closed in again. When wayfarers were met, it was as if they had appeared by magic, out of nowhere. Once, where the road was narrow, there was a group of peasants who suddenly came out of the mist and stopped to ask their way. Their speech was very strange to Robin, but John-go-in-the-Wynd seemed to know what they said, for he directed them in the same strange tongue.

The original passage is provided for student comparison. By referencing the original passage, students often find additional ways to improve their own version—or they may find some things they like better about their passage!

(from *You Are the Editor!*, Humanities Software # I-225)

4. Point of View

Practice in using first and third person point of view is easily created by selecting passages, typing them on a word processor file, and having students revise/rewrite so the passage reads from the other point of view. For example, the following excerpt from *Island of the Blue Dolphin* by Scott O'Dell is written in first person.

Students are directed to rewrite the passage so that it is in third person instead. They assume the point of view of an onlooker describing the events, and to help them in their change of point of view, they are told the name of the girl in the scene is Karana.

The head rose out of the twisting arms like a giant stalk. The gold eyes with their black rims were fixed on me. Above the sounds of the waves and the water splashing and Rontu's barking, I could hear the snapping of his beak, which was sharper than the knife I held in my hand.

I drove the knife down into his body and as I did this I was suddenly covered, or so it seemed, with a countless number of leeches, sucking at my skin. Fortunately one hand was free, the hand that held the knife, and again and again I struck down through the tough hide. The suckers, which were fastened to me and pained greatly, lessened their hold. Slowly the arms stopped moving and then grew limp.

After completing the activity, students answer questions such as: Why do you think Scott O'Dell chose to write in the first person? What was lost or gained by your third person version of the passage? Which point of view do you prefer and why?

(from *Finding a Writing Style*, Humanities Software # I-242)

5. Developing a Character Sketch

Character sketches can be modeled after existing brief sketches from literature students are reading. A good modeling technique, which provides students with lots of

support and invariably ends in success, is to retain the style, structure, and flow of an existing sketch, and simply change the character and thus the description. The word portrait describing the Fat Man in *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett works well to illustrate this strategy. Mr. Hammett chose language that sounds fat, soft, and flabby. He used almost cartoon-like images of the Fat Man. He also uses simile. Students are directed to read the passage and see if they can find other ways in which Mr. Hammett was able to paint such a good word portrait of his Fat Man character.

After studying the passage, they are give the problem of rewriting the passage to describe the Thin Man. The [ ] marks help them find the sections they need to change. For example, they need to find a hand simile to replace "like a fat pink star" as a description of the Thin Man's hand.

> The [fat] man was [flabbily fat] with [bulbous pink] cheeks and lips and chins and neck, with a [great soft egg of a belly] that was all his torso, and [pendant cones] for arms and legs. As he advanced to meet Spade, all his [bulbs rose and shook and fell separately] with each step, in the manner of [clustered soap-bubbles not yet released from the pipe through which they had been blown]. His eyes, made [small by fat puffs around them], were dark and sleek. Dark ringlets thinly covered his [broad] scalp. He wore a black cutaway coat, black vest, black satin ascot tie holding a pinkish pearl, striped gray worsted trousers, and patent-leather shoes.
>
> His voice was a [throaty purr], "Ah, Mr. Spade," he said with enthusiasm and held out a hand like a [fat pink star].

(from *Character Sketch*, Humanities Software # S-202)

6. Writing Dialogue

Good dialogue is often difficult for students to write. They will overuse the word "said," or else they won't use it enough, favoring words such as cried, laughed, shouted, giggled, etc. until the reader is completely distracted.

Modeling of good dialogue can be accomplished by selecting well written passages and replacing the descriptor of the speaker with a blank. This section of dialogue from *A Wrinkle In Time* by Madeleine L'Engle works well:

> "I hate it!" Charles Wallace _____. "I hate the Dark Thing!"
>
> Mrs. Whatsit nodded. "Yes, Charles dear. We thought it would be too frightening for you to see it first of all about your own, beloved world."
>
> "But what is it?" Calvin _____. "We know that it's evil, but what is it?"
>
> "Yyouu hhave ssaidd itt!" Mrs. Which's voice _____. "Itt iss Eevill. Itt iss thee Ppowers of Ddarrkness!"
>
> "But what's going to happen?" Meg's voice _____. "Oh, please, Mrs. Which, tell us what's going to happen!"
>
> "Wee wwill cconnttinnue tto ffightt!"
>
> Something in Mrs. Which's voice made all three of the children stand straighter, throwing back their shoulders with determination, looking at the glimmer that was Mrs. Which with pride and confidence.

Students are given the unaltered passage to compare with their own. Students read through the text and compare how Madeleine L'Engle used descriptive words to show the speaker's state of mind as he or she was talking.

(from *Finding a Writing Style*, Humanities Software # I-242)

Summary

By combining literary passages for modeling with the flexibility of word processing for practicing, you can explore many ways to help your students improve their writing skills while becoming better acquainted with the techniques of the masters. ■

Karen Jostad, President
Humanities Software
P.O. Box 950
Hood River, Oregon 97031

Style Checkers: Good News and Bad News

Stephen Marcus

Computerized style checkers are a hotly debated topic these days.

By way of background, these programs—including spelling checkers—analyze some of the surface features of your writing. You take a document you've prepared with a word processor and use the style checker to do things like calculate readability scores, average sentence length, or percentage of active vs. passive verbs; check for certain punctuation and spelling errors; and catch proscribed words, e.g., sexist language, jargon, cliches, or nominalizations. Usually the style checker also provides some comments on what its analysis may imply about the quality of your writing.

Here are some of the problems with style checkers:

- Students learn how to change the "readouts" on their writing, i.e., change the numbers according to the teacher's or the program's values, but too often they are doing no actual thinking about the substance of their writing.

- Some research indicates that the changes in style the program suggests (and these are usually based on traditional composition texts) are not, in fact, the bases of teachers' grades on papers. Students are getting mixed messages about what people value in their writing.

- Computers are still too often described as "objective" and "nonjudgmental" when, in fact, the style checker's comments (written, of course, by a person) may be highly subjective, biased, or idiosyncratic. The calculations it performs are often based on an arbitrary choice of readability formulas.

On the other hand, style checkers are often defended on these grounds:

- With proper instruction, students understand the tentative nature of the computerized analyses.

"Letting the students run the style checker puts some power back into their hands. They can get perspective on their early drafts without subjecting themselves to other people's criticism (at least not anyone they know)."

- Common (if somewhat superficial) writing problems can be identified quickly, leaving the teacher to concentrate on more substantive qualities of the writing.

- Letting the students run the style checker puts some power back into their hands. They can get perspective on their early drafts without subjecting themselves to other people's criticism (at least not anyone they know).

It's one thing to use a style checker on a piece of your own writing. It's quite another for students to be using one in a classroom, in a situation where they are under terrific pressure to shape their writing to please someone else, usually a teacher. If you decide to have your students work with one, consider these common approaches:

- Analyze some writing by Hemingway and Faulkner. Discuss the computer's "readout" and advice. Apply the program to the Gettysburg Address or the Preamble to the Bill of Rights. Make sure everyone understands the strengths and weakness of the software, as well as something about how it works.

- Analyze some of your own writing and discuss with the class what you thought and felt as you read the analysis.

- Have your students write letters to the computer assessing the quality of its analysis of their writing.

When you're evaluating a style checker for possible use in your classroom, pay special attention to the "personality" or the "tone of voice" of the text (what I've come to call in general "the host in the machine"). Typically the use of a program like a style checker requires the teacher constantly to monitor its effects and the students' reactions to the software. The value of the activities you plan will to a great degree depend on how well students understand the abilities and the limitations of the software. ■

Teaching Writing Style Through Hidden Sentences

Karen Jostad

Through a simple technique that has all the motivational aspects of a quiz game, you can encourage students to study and model the writing styles of successful authors.

Begin by selecting a story, essay, or other piece of writing that contains one or more passages that exemplify good writing in a way that you want to convey to your students. Then use a word processor to type in the passage.

Next, ask your students to add additional sentences to the originals, but to do so in such a way that they "hide" their sentences within the passage. Once the sentences are hidden, a writing partner or friend is asked to find the hidden sentences; that is, those sentences not written by the original author.

To be successful in this activity, a student needs to mimic the tone, point of view, sentence structure, and language used by the original author. Likewise, students will need to be sensitive to those components of style in order to discover the hidden sentence.

The student looking for the hidden sentences should enclose them in brackets [ ] as they find them. In addition to passages of your choosing, the following excerpts can be used for this activity. These excerpts are all found in the "Hidden Sentences" activity from *Finding a Writing Style* (S203) from Humanities Software.

Passage 1:

A fearful idea now suddenly drove the blood in torrents upon my heart, and for a brief period, I once more relapsed into insensibility. Upon recovering, I at once started to my feet, trembling convulsively in every fibre. I thrust my arms wildly above and around me in all directions. I felt nothing; yet dreaded to move a step, lest I should be impeded by the walls of a tomb. Perspiration burst from every pore, and stood in cold big beads upon my forehead. The agony of suspense grew at length intolerable, and I cautiously moved forward, with my arms extended, and my eyes straining from their sockets, in the hope of catching some faint ray of light. I proceeded for many paces; but still all was blackness and vacancy. I breathed more freely. It seemed evident that mine was not, at least, the most hideous of fates."

Excerpted from The Pit and the Pendulum
by Edgar Allan Poe

Passage 2:

"Foreign?" said the stranger. "And who calls me a foreigner?"

"Well, I never yet heard of the dev—of your claiming American Citizenship," said Dan'l Webster with surprise.

"And who with better right?" said the stranger, with one of his terrible smiles. "When the first wrong was done to the first Indian, I was there. When the first slaver put out for the Congo, I stood on her deck. Am I not in your books and stories and beliefs, from the first settlements on? Am I not spoken of, still, in every church in New England? 'Tis true the North claims me for a Southerner and the South for a Northerner, but I am neither. I am merely an honest American like yourself—and of the best descent—for, to tell the truth, Mr. Webster, though I don't like to boast of it, my name is older in this country than yours."

"Aha!" said Dan'l Webster, with the veins standing out in his forehead. "Then I stand on the Constitution! I demand a trial for my client!"

"The case is hardly one for an ordinary court," said the stranger, his eyes flickering. "And, indeed, the lateness of the hour—"

"Let it be any court you choose, so it is an American judge and an American jury!" said Dan'l Webster in his pride. "Let it be the quick or the dead; I'll abide the issue!"

Excerpted from The Devil and Daniel Webster
by Stephen Vincent Benet

Passage 3:

As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect. He was lying on his back, as it was armor-plated, and when he lifted his head a little he could see his dome-like brown belly divided into stiff arched segments on top of which the bed quilt could hardly keep in

position and was about to slide off completely. His numerous legs, which were pitifully thin compared to the rest of his bulk, waved helplessly before his eyes.

Excerpted from The Metamorphosis
by Franz Kafka

Passage 4:

The great troopship sneaks past the city and the rags leave her, a dark thing steaming into the dark. On the decks and in the passages and in the bunks the thousands of men are collapsed in sleep. Only their faces show under the dim blue blackout lights—faces and an impression of tangled hands and feet and legs and equipment. Officers and military police stand guard over this great sleep, a sleep multiplied, the sleep of thousands. An odor rises from the men, the characteristic odor of an army. It is the smell of wool and the bitter smell of fatigue and the smell of gun oil and leather. Troops always have this odor. The men lie sprawled, some with their mouths open, but they do not snore. Perhaps they are too tired to snore but their breathing is a pulsing, audible thing.

Excerpted from Once There Was a War
by John Steinbeck

[Karen Jostad, Humanities Software, PO Box 1064, Hood River, OR 97031.]

Pleasing Ourselves First:
Another Perspective on Writing and Word Processing

Annette Paparello

These exercises will be of special interest to ESL teachers. English as a Second Language students need to be taught the skills to determine if their writing is logical, if the form is consistent with the purpose or intended audience, and if the organization is appropriate.

I've just been through it again! Here I am in a room of computer professionals, extolling the virtues of word processing, and after an hour of discussion, they are the same we have read in countless articles: perfect papers without erasures or spelling errors and longer papers.

It seems to me that there has been little growth in the rationales teachers are using for implementing word processing in their classes. Some may disagree, but I want my students to be proud of what they *say*, not necessarily the way it *looks*.

These word processing exercises will be of special interest to English teachers and specifically English as a second language (ESL) teachers. I developed these exercises with two things in mind: First, ESL students need to be taught the skills that allow them not only to ask questions about the mechanics of their writing, but about the fundamentals of their writing as well. My students need to determine if their writing is logical, if the form is consistent with the purpose or intended audience, and if the organization is appropriate.

Second, we need to remember that word processors are limited to a few functions: delete, insert, cut and paste, and search and replace. My goal is to use these functions to encourage my students to inspect their writing on a global level.

MAKING TRANSITIONS

I set out to design lessons that are curriculum driven and which give my students practice in manipulating the intrinsic organization of their writing. For that reason, after I've asked my students to describe a process, whether it be the events that led up to an argument with someone or how they prepared for a trip, and they have successfully completed that task, they are asked to move the conclusion to the beginning of the writing piece. Then, by making as few changes as possible, they must return the cohesion or logic to the piece.

This exercise highlights the importance of transitions between paragraphs in ways I have not found possible with other mediums.

CODING

In this exercise, my students are asked to write a letter. They are then given a situation in which this letter must be coded so that anyone else reading it won't know the purpose.

This exercise (adapted from The Love Letter, published by Macmillan), provides a perfect example:

The Love Letter

Once there was a boy who loved a girl very much. The girl's father, however, did not like the boy and did not want their love to grow. The boy wanted to write the girl a love letter, but he was sure that the girl's father would read it first, and so he wrote this letter to the girl:

```
The great love I said I have for you
has vanished, and I find my contempt for you
increases daily. When I see you,
I do not even like the way you look;
the one thing I want to do is to
look the other way. I never wanted to
marry you. Our last rendezvous
was very dull and in no way has
made me anxious to see you again.
You think only of yourself.
If we were married, I know that I would find
life intolerable, and I would have no
contentment in living with you. I have a heart
to give, but it is not a heart
I want to give to you. No one is more
demanding or selfish than you, and less
able to care for me and be of help to me.
I sincerely want you to understand that
I speak the truth.

You will do me a favor
if you consider this the end. Do not try
to answer this. Your letters are full of
trivial matters that don't interest me.You've no
true feeling for me. Good-bye! Believe me
I do not care for you. Please do not think
I am still your loving friend.
```

The girl's father indeed read the letter. He was pleased and then gave the letter to his daughter. The girl read the letter and became ecstatic. The boy still loved her.

By inserting a line between each line of their original letter, students can appear to change the intent of their letter. The only restriction is that the letter must still make sense when read literally.

MAKING THE MOST OF TIME

A story written about an event from the past can, through search and replace and very careful proofreading, be made to occur in the present or the future. For that matter, have students try changing the sex of the protagonist of a writing piece. (I am always amazed at how gender-driven our language is after this last exercise.)

FINDING A VOICE

In this exercise, students write a story that includes several characters. Then, by splitting the computer screen, they can rewrite the story from inside the mind of one of the characters. This lesson enables them to practice writing from different points of view. By the same token, having several languages available, advanced students can write in both English and in their native language. They can then compare how concepts such as time, the relationship between man and nature, aging, the past, etc. are imbedded in the language.

The majority of these lessons require some formal reasoning abilities on the part of my students. For that reason, they are most appropriate with middle and high school level students; however, I have had success in a highly individualized program with upper elementary students as well.

These exercises and others enable my students to distance themselves from their writing and look at it with new eyes. And using a word processor supports the process by establishing an environment where fundamental questions about a writing piece are asked naturally. My students are proud of what they have said *and* how they have said it.

Then at the end we run the piece through a spelling checker—but that's more for everybody else. First we make sure we've pleased ourselves! ■

[Annette Paparello, 27 Cedar Ave., Miller Place, NY 11764.]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Classroom Writing Activities to Support the Curriculum

Judy Piper

This new TWN feature contains activities designed to help teachers create word processing files in many different subject areas for students to complete throughout the school day. In this way a teacher can individualize learning in the classroom with students able to complete work at their own pace. The files provide easy make-up and review lessons for individual students and give all students many opportunities to practice using the word processor.

Match the Meaning

Vocabulary development is an important part of all content areas. A file can include vocabulary words from any subject area such as science, social studies, health, or math. This activity also works well with spelling lists or vocabulary words from basal texts. Words are listed at the top of the activity with the meanings numbered underneath. Students use the block move to match the correct word with its definition.

cumulus cirrus

1. [ ] A massive cloud having a flat base and rounded outlines.
2. [ ] A wispy white cloud made of minute ice crystals at high altitudes.

Order, Please!

Sequencing is a critical component of understanding in many areas of the curriculum. Science experiments may be placed in files for students to put in the correct order after a demonstration, allowing the teacher to check for understanding. Another activity may be taken from a novel students are reading or the biography of an important person in history. Students use the block move to rearrange the events in the correct order. For example:

Abraham Lincoln became President of the United States.

Mr. Lincoln freed the slaves.

Abraham learned to read by himself.

The Civil War ended.

The Times They are a'Changin'

Students can record the transformations in nature by writing poems monthly. Their observations may be inserted into a file that includes a series of sentence frames. This type of prompted writing offers students the opportunity to document changes and provides information for revising at a later time. The poems also may be published in a book or class anthology.

October is a month for _____.

It's a time to _____.

In October trees _____.

The October sky _____.

In October I _____.

42

3 Keyboarding

Old, old, old
that good old gold got old
sold, sold, sold
that good old gold got sold
sold, sold, sold
that lad holds that sold gold

Key-Words from Humanities Software

KEYBOARDING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Karen Jostad and Jon Madian

Are you one of the many language arts teachers who, while convinced of the value of word processing, consider laborious hunting and pecking a poor tradeoff, especially when time needs to be spent on writing skills?

Some new keyboarding programs make learning to type much more efficient and fun than ever before; still, educators disagree over whether learning to touch type is the best use of a student's limited computer time. On the other hand, good touch typing skills and use of a word processor certainly make writing more enjoyable while improving both the writer's ability to compose thoughts and the quality of the final composition. In any case, there does seem to be general agreement that students probably should not be taught touch typing before the fourth grade, and that they will need approximately six weeks of daily practice (20-minute sessions) to gain a beginning level of proficiency.

If you are thinking about teaching touch typing on computers this year, there are a number of exciting new programs to choose from. In this article we will discuss the features we find most significant.

1. Language-based approach

Many of the new programs designed for school use have what is being called a language-based approach. Students learn or are at least reinforced in their spelling and even composing skills while they learn to type. In other words, instead of typing letter combinations that never occur in words such as "tsaf," students might type "as fast as." It is logical from every point of view that the more students type letter patterns likely to be found in words, the more expert they will become in their typing. Figure 1 shows an example from **Key Words.**

Advocates of this language-based approach hope that this word patterning approach to typing will do more than merely increase student accuracy and speed in typing. They point out that there is a body of research that indicates that many people learn to spell and even compose more easily when they learn to type. In other words, while people are learning to type they can also learn basic word and sentence patterns. This is particularly significant for students who are still developing their basic spelling and writing skills, whether they are average fourth graders, bilingual, special education students, or otherwise language disadvantaged. But even if the beginning typist is an excellent speller, these language-based keyboarding packages should still be more efficient in helping them gain speed and accuracy.

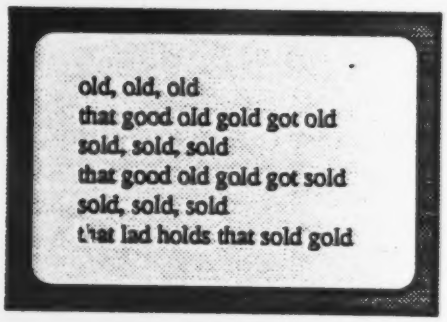

old, old, old
that good old gold got old
sold, sold, sold
that good old gold got sold
sold, sold, sold
that lad holds that sold gold

Figure 1. *The rhythm of the chant poetry form combined with short commonly used words from the "old" family, teaches the "o"and "g" keys.*

2. Accuracy and speed developed as separate skills

A second design innovation separates the development of accuracy from the development of speed. Current research in the teaching of typing shows the relative importance of typing skills to be in this order: correct technique, speed of stroking, and accuracy. This makes perfect sense—and yet, many older typing programs still combine speed and accuracy practice and disregard technique.

Programs should carefully introduce technique and provide quick and easy access to review information on technique via reference cards, wall charts, or other devices. Then students should be able to work on their accuracy without being overly concerned about speed, and practice speed without being overly concerned about accuracy. Only at the point of moving from one level of skill development

44

to the next higher level should students expect to achieve a measure of combined speed and accuracy.

3. Order of keys taught

A third interesting development pertains to which keys are taught first—specifically, not beginning by teaching the home row. While most keyboarding programs still focus initially upon the home row, there are now a few programs that have broken with tradition and teach other keys first. Research in the area of kinesthetics indicates that the first keys to introduce should be those that use the stronger, better coordinated pointer and middle fingers. The need for beginning typists to peek under their fingers is much alleviated by not introducing all home row keys at the same time.

There are two sides to this argument, however. Do students sense the home row when they don't know the keys? How important is it to provide additional practice for weaker little fingers that strike the all important "a" and "p" keys? Interestingly, even programs that don't teach the "a" first teach it very early, so perhaps this is more an area for debate among theorists than a practical concern.

4. Introducing word processing editing feature concurrently with keyboarding instruction

A fourth design characteristic we are seeing in new keyboarding programs is the introduction of word processing editing features concurrently with keyboarding instruction. This makes sense. We are learning to use a new technology, and not just a typing keyboard. The use of the DELETE key is the one editing feature that bears discussion. Speed and fluency of stroking is believed to be inhibited by correcting errors as you type. Currently composing instructors as well as keyboarding instructors agree that corrections should not be made until the passage is completed. When you are looking at keyboarding programs, notice that although many keyboarding programs make the DELETE key functional during practice sessions, others have arrived at a more preferable design that allows for the correction of errors on an edit screen, but only after sufficient practice has developed letter stroking patterns to a fluent level.

5. Recordkeeping system

A fifth design consideration is the recordkeeping system. Most of the newer programs have the ability to keep track of a number of students. Some of them can even keep track of pairs of students who are taking turns using the program during the same practice session. This has obvious advantages in most lab or classroom settings.

Summary

As in all other software, buyer beware! Many new and popular keyboarding programs have wedded keyboard practice with arcade game formats. Many of these programs are so goal-oriented that speed becomes the main target, rather than correct technique of finger placement (which often is reduced to a hurried hunt and peck) or correct eye movement (students search for single letters or words to appear somewhere on the screen). Fluency in stroking patterns also is not developed, because students are presented unrelated and non-sequenced material. Remember: Eventually a good touch typist will type in phrases—not letters or even words. Arcade games work against this objective.

Wherever there is considerable innovation, there is a danger that designers will take an idea too far, that in breaking with tradition they will lose some of the structure that was of basic utility. While the five innovations mentioned above can represent improvements, it's a good idea to take a look at some keyboarding programs before purchasing one. Look at the design of the programs, keeping in mind your own students and instructional goals.

Here are five keyboarding programs that we suggest you look at before deciding:

Keyboard Cadet
Apple, IBM, Commodore
Mindscapes
3444 Dundee Rd.
Northbrook, IL 60062
(312) 480-7667
$39.95

Success with Typing
Apple
Scholastic, Inc.
730 Broadway
New York, NY 10003
(212) 505-3000
$87.84

Key Words
Apple
Humanities Software
PO Box 590727
San Francisco, CA 94159
(415) 759-9324
$49.95

Type!
Apple, IBM, Commodore
Broderbund
17 Paul Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 479-1700
$44.95

Microtype, The Wonderful World of Paws
Apple, Commodore, IBM, Radio Shack
South-Western Publishing
Cincinnati, OH
$39.95 ■

KEYBOARDING—An Interview with Keith Wetzel

A former elementary and middle school teacher, Keith Wetzel has conducted research on teaching writing and word processing to students grades 3–5, and is currently workshop coordinator for the Center for Advanced Technology in Education at the University of Oregon. Keith agreed to share his views on the subject of keyboarding with ***The Writing Notebook*** *readers.*

Keith, many people feel that touch typing is a fundamental skill students need before they can get the full benefits of word processing. What do you think?

With some hesitation I would agree. If teachers and students have a sufficient amount of hardware and software to make keyboarding training realistic—yes. If students are using the computer for an hour or less a week, they should use a word processor or writing aid without worrying about keyboarding.

Recently I read Henry Becker's survey of computers in the schools. He found that in computer-owning schools, the computer/student ratio nationally was 1 to 40. For each student to use the computer for 30 minutes a day, a 1 to 12 ratio is needed. I believe that in a situation in which there are a limited number of computers, keyboarding instruction should be ignored. A short amount of time—an hour, perhaps—may be used to acquaint students with the home row and where to place their hands. But if time is indeed precious, I recommend using it to do a class project where everyone makes a contribution, rather than using the time to teach keyboarding at the expense of other computer experiences.

How long does it take for students to become competent beginning touch typists?

This question is related to the goal of the keyboard instruction. If third, fourth, and fifth graders are to type as quickly as they can write by pencil, they will need 20 to 30 hours of instruction. In addition, new research has indicated that elementary students (after 20 hours of instruction) regress in their touch typing skills if they do not practice touch typing at intervals throughout the year.

What criteria should elementary students achieve to be considered adequate typists?

Truthfully, I wish the keyboarding question did not exist, because the real question should be: What experiences do students need to learn to enjoy writing and improve their writing? Clearly, the primary goal is not keyboarding, it's writing.

Now the problem is that if students are to benefit from the advantage of using word processing—ease of revision—they need to be able to use the word processor efficiently.

Without keyboarding instruction, upper elementary students will write at the keyboard at half the rate they write with pencil. Is this a problem? Yes. The physical part of writing—transcription—should be an automatic skill. Students should use their mental energy to think about ideas, how to express them, what goes next, the audience, and so on. When they have to add one more task to an already complex set of writing tasks, writing becomes more difficult rather than less.

Students in the upper elementary grades write with pencil at about 10 words per minute. Without keyboard training they write with the computer at a rate of 5 words per minute. Students should keyboard as efficiently as they write by pencil before they begin to use the computer for their daily writing. And then they should practice touch typing at intervals until their typing rate reaches 20 words per minute. Business education experts have indicated that students retain more of their newly acquired skills once they reach the plateau of 20 words per minute.

How do we decide when to teach kids to touch type? Is it a function of size of hand? Dexterity? Maturity? Attention span? Or can we base the decision simply on when students have access to the computer for word processing?

I would agree with the last comment. Students should receive keyboarding instruction just prior to actual use of the computer for writing.

If we lived in a world in which we could decide the optimal configuration, then the question of maturity would be more important.

46

I have read that children in grades K and 1 can keyboard as accurately and quickly as they can write by pencil. Intuitively this makes sense. I haven't measured this, but I've taught first graders to print, and I know how much they struggle with the direction of the letters, staying on the lines, and writing neatly.

I suspect that if keyboarding instruction started in first grade, a shorter amount of concentrated instruction would be required in the third and fourth grades. And in grades K and 1, nothing would need to be replaced in the curriculum. Just as students practice tracing letters, they would practice the letter in another manner—saying, seeing, and pressing the correct key. This is a good research topic. I think it would be worth further investigation over a period of years.

There are a number of new keyboarding programs. How do the newer programs differ from the earlier programs?

Generally, the programs that are based on sound theory developed by the business educators are the best. I think we have moved passed the violent, space invaders-variety games that attempt to fascinate and entertain as well as drill.

Now we have programs that are more closely related to the typing instruction taught at the secondary level. These programs are in my opinion the best. They model correct posture and keystriking, and many of them offer excellent drill as well as opportunities to use an open screen, where the teacher can dictate spelling words and sentences.

It seems that it would be most desirable to teach keyboarding in a lab setting. Is this true? Can keyboarding be taught in a classroom with one computer?

Again, the one computer to 30 students classroom does not allow sufficient time for each student to practice every day for 20 minutes. Mathematically there is not enough time during the school day for each student to get on the computer. Remember, there are times during the day when students do not use the computer—lunch, movies, art, PE, regrouping for math, etc.

A lab usually allows teachers to set priorities such as "This year all third grade classes will use the computer for keyboarding during the second nine-week period, and then they will use the lab for writing during the third and fourth nine-week periods."

Should spelling and related writing skills be taught while teaching typing?

This is an interesting idea; however, to date I'm not aware of any teachers who have achieved this kind of integration. In typing instruction there is a standard progression for teaching the order of the letters; you teach the home row keys before you teach the keys you need to stretch to type.

On the other hand, if you were emphasizing c-v-c words in language arts, and during your keyboarding time you practiced short a words such as ad, add, dad, and sad, there would be an excellent opportunity for integration.

Do you see benefits to teaching touch typing to language disabled students?

Again, I don't know that I can generalize to all students with learning disabilities. I would definitely try it. I've seen several reports that testify to the success of word processing with children who have writing problems. However, keyboarding requires dexterity and motor/visual coordination, and it would be wise to see if a student with a particular problem would benefit from use of the keyboard. We know that there are some children who have more trouble learning to keyboard than others. I recommend trying it on an individual basis and proceeding if it is worth the amount of time needed to master the skill.

Can we turn keyboard instruction over to a computer keyboarding program entirely, or is it important for teachers to model or demonstrate or otherwise deliver instruction in addition to the computer program?

The computer cannot watch the student perform. It cannot monitor whether a student strikes the key with the correct finger.

Philosophically I have problems with those who would replace teachers with machines. Learning includes much more than specific skill acquisition. Seldom do computers teach love of learning. Teachers include reasons, models, values, human interaction, and the human touch.

This point was illustrated in a research study at the college level: a group of college students received a computer-based typing program. They practiced without teacher assistance for an hour a day for 30 days. At the end of the training, the speed and accuracy of these students were compared to those who completed a teacher-based

typing program. The skill levels of the students were similar at the end of 30 days; however, the computer-based students complained that their questions weren't answered, and that they didn't receive assistance when needed.

The components of a good school district keyboarding instructional program include: 1) collaboration in planning and implementing the program between business education (touch typing teachers) and elementary teachers; 2) elementary teachers who have sufficient training in the teaching of keyboarding to feel comfortable with the delivery of a new skill; 3) a scripted teacher's guide that makes direct instruction efficient; and 4) a good keyboarding software program.

What are the most important characteristics a school district should look for in a keyboarding instructional program?

My answer may not be the expected answer. I would not start with the software. I would start with the teacher training and the amount of student practice time demanded by any program that will work. Here are the questions I would ask:

1) Did teachers receive training to teach their students keyboarding, or are they beginning without training? Was this training done by business education experts? Do teachers feel competent to teach keyboarding?

2) Is there a sufficient time for each student to practice? And once the keyboarding instruction is complete, are the skills practiced at times in order to maintain the skill level?

3) Does the program include a recordkeeping component (either a disk-based or a paper-based [graph] method of recording progress)?

4) Is there sufficient variety in the program? Does it combine teacher dictation, disk-based practice and nonviolent games?

5) Do students using the program meet your goals for the program? If students are to type at least as fast as they write by pencil, do they? Is there any research to suggest that following the program works?

Typing programs seem to emphasize technique, speed and accuracy to varying degrees. Of these, is there a priority teachers should be aware of as they instruct their students?

They are all related; however, the goal is for students to be able to use the computer for writing, for improving their writing, and to learn to think by revising and rewriting. Good technique is immaterial if students still type substantially slower than they write with pencil. If keyboarding does not become automatic, students will not spend their cognitive energy on the higher-level task of communicating effectively.

Typing teachers especially feel that if kids learn to hunt and peck first, it will be harder for them to learn to touch type. Do you agree?

Several business education teachers have voiced this concern to me, while others have indicated that it is not of great concern to them. A major point is the extent of prior student keyboard practice. Those who were less concerned felt that the occasional computer use of elementary students was not a problem. I think that if students use the computer at least two hours a week, then they should have keyboarding instruction, and the instruction should be consistent with instruction they may receive at a later time such as in business education courses.

There's a political issue about who should teach touch typing, typing teachers or classroom or English teachers. Do you have any thoughts on this?

I personally would like to have the teacher in the grade before the students come to me teach it! I think that language arts time **should not** be used for typing instruction.

An ideal place for keyboarding is in a computer literacy class. Some schools offer a computer literacy class for every sixth grader in the district. These classes include a wide variety of topics. I've found that this is an ideal place to teach it. About 20 minutes of the 50-minute class is then devoted to keyboarding instruction. The next step is to teach word processing and to practice the keyboarding skills in the word processing assignments. Data base usage may follow and again, as students input data, they practice keyboarding skills. In this situation, selected computer literacy teachers receive training to teach keyboarding to all students. Language arts teachers teach writing with the computer as a tool, not keyboarding or the mechanics of word processing. ■

KEYBOARDING/WORD PROCESSING TOPICS . . . SOME FINDINGS

The Electric Typewriter versus the Computer

Judy Roeske, a trained typing teacher, currently instructs keyboarding classes at Benson High School in Portland, OR. She has found several advantages to using computer keyboards rather than electric typewriters with her students; namely, that they:

- learn to key faster;
- acquire word processing skills while learning to keyboard;
- improve performance in computer classes;
- develop an understanding of computer concepts;
- can save reports on disk for other class projects; and
- apply their skills to occupational and home settings.

The keyboarding teacher also benefits in several important ways:

- Students are enthusiastic;
- the environment is orderly, quiet, and controlled;
- software provides individualized drills for students;
- software reinforces classroom instruction; and
- there is time for individual attention.

Clearly, many of Roeske's findings are often-stated advantages to using computers in the classroom; that is, interactive software geared to the individual needs of each student, the ability to maintain necessary records automatically, and benefits of on-screen animated demonstrations.

Processing the Process

Fay Wheeler, author of "Can Word Processing Help the Writing Process?" (*Learning*, March 1985), discusses both positive and negative outcomes of using word processing with students.

On the positive side, she found that students can keep a record of each of their drafts and study them to discover problems in their writing. Her students who use word processing tend to have an improved attitude toward writing even when they are not using a computer. In support of cooperative learning, the word processor allows several copies of a composition to be easily printed for peer evaluation. Peer collaboration is accomplished easily, because several students can view the text simultaneously and illegible handwriting is never a problem.

Writers who are fooled by the illusion of professional-looking copy, however, tend to compose longer documents and revise more frequently, but their revisions may focus on word level changes, rather than on the quality of the text. *Without proper teaching, inexperienced writers will not improve their writing no matter which tools they use.*

Research Findings

Students at Lakeville High School, Lakeville, MN, took part in an experiment during the 1983-84 school year. The results substantiated the claims generally stated by proponents of the use of word processors. An experimental group of sophomores learned to use the word processor while a control group completed the same written assignments by hand. Based upon this experiment, the staff and students came to these conclusions:

When students use the word processor, they:

- produce more writing;
- revise more;
- are more willing to share their writing with other students and the teacher;
- begin to write more quickly once they have been given the assignment;
- spend more time in the writing process during a class period;
- spend less time talking with peers about non-writing topics during class;
- exhibit more pride in their written accomplishments; and
- enjoy the writing process more than when writing by hand (measured by a long-term study of student attitudes and writing).

When teaching the writing process to students using the word processor, teachers:

- spend more time instructing individual students in the writing process;
- spend more time talking to students about writing during the class period;
- more easily observe the student's writing at different stages in an assignment;
- demand more emphasis on the revision of papers, regardless of length;
- spend less time correcting papers, because all copies are legible;
- more easily avoid biases because of student handwriting and overall appearance of the paper; and
- can choose to spend less time writing comments on student papers.

As elementary teachers begin to increase their use of computers in writing, many of these same findings may prove to be true.

[From Writing & Computers newsletter, Portland, Oregon Public Schools. Reprinted with permission.]

PRIMARY KEYBOARDING

Cathy Gunn

In workshop presentations, primary teachers often ask: When should keyboarding instruction begin in the planning of computer curriculum?

One answer to this question for workshop presenters from the Central Illinois Educational Service Center was to develop workshops around the use of a large, floor-size keyboard. Primary students practice locating letters, numbers, and commands on this keyboard without having a computer in the classroom. As teachers work on letter and number recognition or spelling words, the keyboard may be used to reinforce classroom language arts activities. These plastic keyboard mats may be purchased from computer supply companies, but here's how to make your own at great savings.

Our first step was to purchase 102 yards of clear plastic (36-inch width) from a fabric store, a quantity which allowed us to take advantage of a large quantity purchase discount. We had the plastic cut into 14 three-yard lengths at the store. We also purchased a supply of markers, 3-inch stencils for number and letter keys, and 2-inch stencils for words (space bar, tab, esc, etc.). These materials were boxed into kits, along with directions on making the keyboard, a list of ideas for teaching keyboarding with the plastic floor mat, a blank plastic keyboard, and a finished keyboard to be used as a guide. Kits were checked out to teachers for one month and then returned to us. Teachers or school districts paid $12 for their keyboard, and many keyboards were made by several teachers working together. With two teachers working together, a keyboard could be made in about one hour.

Making the first keyboard was, of course, the most time-consuming, because the squares for the keys needed to be measured, using 6-inch squares. I used "Magnum 44" black markers, which have a broad tip that allows quick lines to be drawn using a measuring stick as a guide. Numbers and letters were drawn with 3-inch stencils, using a smaller marker to outline and the Magnum 44 marker to fill in. A large red marker was used to draw a line down the middle of the keyboard to mark the division of left-hand and right-hand letters. Some teachers also outlined the letters of the home row with a blue marker.

Once the first keyboard was made, it was used to trace the remaining keyboards. To do this, we simply placed a blank plastic length over a finished keyboard and traced lines, letters, and numbers, using a measuring stick for a guide. Some teachers were able to freehand the letters, while others chose to use stencils.

We developed "Make It and Take It" workshops on making the kits, providing all materials and teaching ideas. Springfield School District #186 purchased kits for all elementary building coordinators and held the workshop in a school library, with 30 teachers making their keyboards all at once on the library tables. The school cafeteria is also a convenient place to meet.

One group of teachers hung their keyboard in the school hallway and found that it attracted a great deal of attention. Many students talked about it in passing, stopping to "type" out words or spell their names.

Here are seven teaching ideas using the keyboards. If you have other activities to add to this list, please send them to me and they will be shared in a future issue of *The Writing Notebook*!

NUMBER/LETTER HOP

Materials Needed: Floor-size keyboard
Alphabet and number tags—may be hung around students' necks with yarn or held in hand.

Activity: Teacher or a student calls out a letter or number.
The student assigned that letter/number hops on the keyboard match and hops off again.
Note: The hopping emphasizes the fact that the keystroke should be rapid in order to prevent a long line of that letter!

KEYBOARD COUNTING

Materials Needed: Floor-size keyboard

Activity: Use the numbers on the floor keyboard as a number line for counting, "one more than," "two more than," "greater than/less than," etc.

HAND JIVE

Materials Needed: Floor-size keyboard (with the red line dividing the left- and right-hand keys)
A "left" and "right" tag (to be held or hung with yarn around two students' necks)

Activity: When the teacher or a student calls out a number or letter, the student with the correct "right" or "left" tag hops on and off the designated number or letter.

UPPER/LOWER CASE MATCHING

Materials Needed: Floor-size keyboard

Activity: Use the keyboard for upper and lower case matching.
Hold up a lower case letter; student must find the matching upper case letter by hopping on and then off the correct letter.

NAME THAT CONSONANT

Materials Needed: Floor-size keyboard

Activity: Student must find the beginning consonant or vowel of a spoken word.

WORD HOP PLUS

Materials Needed: Floor-size keyboard
Alphabet and number tags

Activity: As the teacher or a student calls out a word such as "cat," students with those assigned letters must state whether they would use their left or right hand to type their letter before they hop on that letter.

WORD HOP

Materials Needed: Floor-size keyboard
Alphabet and number tags for each student

Activity: Teacher or a student calls out a word, and the students assigned the letters that make up that word spell the word by hopping on and then off in the correct order.

calf
calf
calf
calf
calf
half
half
half
half
half
comb
comb
comb
comb
comb
chalk
chalk
chalk
chalk
chalk
thumb
thumb
thumb
thumb
thumb
wrist
wrist
wrist
wrist
wrist
knuckle
knuckle
knuckle
knuckle
knuckle
knife
knife
knife
knife
knife
achievement
achievement
achievement
achievement
achievement
Clown

52

KEYBOARDING

A Kinesthetic Approach To Reading Through Writing

Jon Madian

The importance of kinesthetic cues for teaching and learning language skills is illustrated in Helen Keller's autobiography. She tells how she first came to understand that language exists as words that represent concrete experiences. Helen's insight came when Ann Sullivan wrote the word "water" in her palm while it was plunged into the cool, gushing flow.

Learning Language Kinesthetically

Fernald made use of the kinesthetic nature of language learning by carrying this idea further in helping students perceive the structure of the written word. She realized that many language disabled students need to kinesthetically experience a word in order to see it. They need to write the word in order to read it. With this in mind she had children draw words in sand and in the air. Now we have students paint words; carve them in clay; glue them onto paper or boards using macaroni, buttons and ribbons; and trace words using sandpaper or fingerpaints.

The Keyboard: Help for the Language Disabled

When typing became popular, educators noticed that the keyboard offered special help to the language disabled. This was not surprising, since most language disabled students have one or more visual, auditory, or fine motor handicaps. This means that they have trouble seeing hearing and sensing the interconnections that are basic to using written language.

Many people who could not easily sense the pattern of the spelling of a word when writing by hand found that as they became touch typists they also became touch spellers. This was particularly true for people whose handwriting suffered due to poor motor skills. Not only did the keyboard provide clear tactile cues for spelling, but it offered an added advantage—students and others could easily read what they had written. Perhaps for the first time, they and others could clearly see their written words.

"Now with word processing... students see the results of every keystroke clearly etched in light."

Now with word processing, the keyboard is joined to the monitor. Students see the results of every keystroke clearly etched in light. They needn't fear making errors, because they can easily edit their work. They can also see their thoughts, rethink them, and then rewrite. Finally, they can publish their writing to reread and share with others.

Here are two new software products that will be especially interesting to people working with students who are language disabled:

Talking Text Writer

Talking Text Writer (Scholastic) is a talking word processor that runs on the Apple IIe or IIc with 128K. It requires an Echo-plus board and speaker to provide sound. The software with the Echo-plus board is priced at $199. ($149. without).

The word processor speaks in a very clear, robot-like voice, saying whatever the student or teacher types. Kids have as much fun listening to nonsense words as they do real words. The talking word processor will "say" individual letters, words, paragraphs, or whole stories.

Key Words

The second product, **Key Words** (Humanities Software), is a keyboarding program uniquely designed for the beginning language learner. It teaches students to touch type while they are learning to spell and read basic word families and sentence patterns. When students learn the home row letters in Lesson One, they don't type "a s d f j k l." Instead they type, "as sad as a sad lad." In this one lesson, students learn short "a" sounds, "ad" words, and the use of simile.

There are three versions of **Key Words**. The Primary Level program is for special education and bilingual students and for children in grades 3 or 4 and below. This version spends more time on one-syllable patterns, repeats words more frequently, and provides twice as many drills at each level.

It is not recommended that students younger than 8 years of age try to learn touch typing due to their small hand size. However, this primary level program can help students become faster hunt-and-peckers and better spellers, since the letter patterns in the drills are within the context of frequently used words from common word families. By the time students are using 11 keys, they have a typing vocabulary of over 200 interesting words.

The Middle Grades version is for students in grades 4 through 8. The vocabulary is appropriate for this level student. More compound and 2- or 3-syllable words are used.

The Adult version is for grades 9 through adult. In this version, the vocabulary is greatly enriched. Students type 3-syllable words and compose formal letters, as well as poems, stories and journals.

"KEY WORDS... a keyboarding program uniquely designed for the beginning language learner."

This program has many other fine features, including clear, interesting screen designs, exercises to build speed, individual diagnostics, and management, and accuracy, speed building, and speed-testing sections. Many teacher options enable the teacher to tailor the program to students' needs. The program runs on the 64K Apple II series.

Perhaps the greatest gifts we can give students are the keys to written language. There can be little doubt that word processing enables us to do this more successfully than ever before. **Talking Text Writer** and **Key Words** will help many educators realize more of their students' and their own potential. ■

About War

If there is a war
Outside my window,
I will have to
Close my window,
And the door,
So the bullets
Won't get in
And make a mess
In the house.

I wonder why
There is war outside,
In my backyard?

Susana

Wars Are

Wars are dirty.
Tanks, cannons, missiles,
Form a lot of mud and dirt.
It is the Army against the Marines.
It is more than that,
It is a killer.
Rockets go over the ocean
Just to destroy.
Everyone gets killed.

Herman

54

4 Writing Using Specific Software

"We are being asked in this age not only to be experiencers and observers of change, but actual architects of change. . . ."

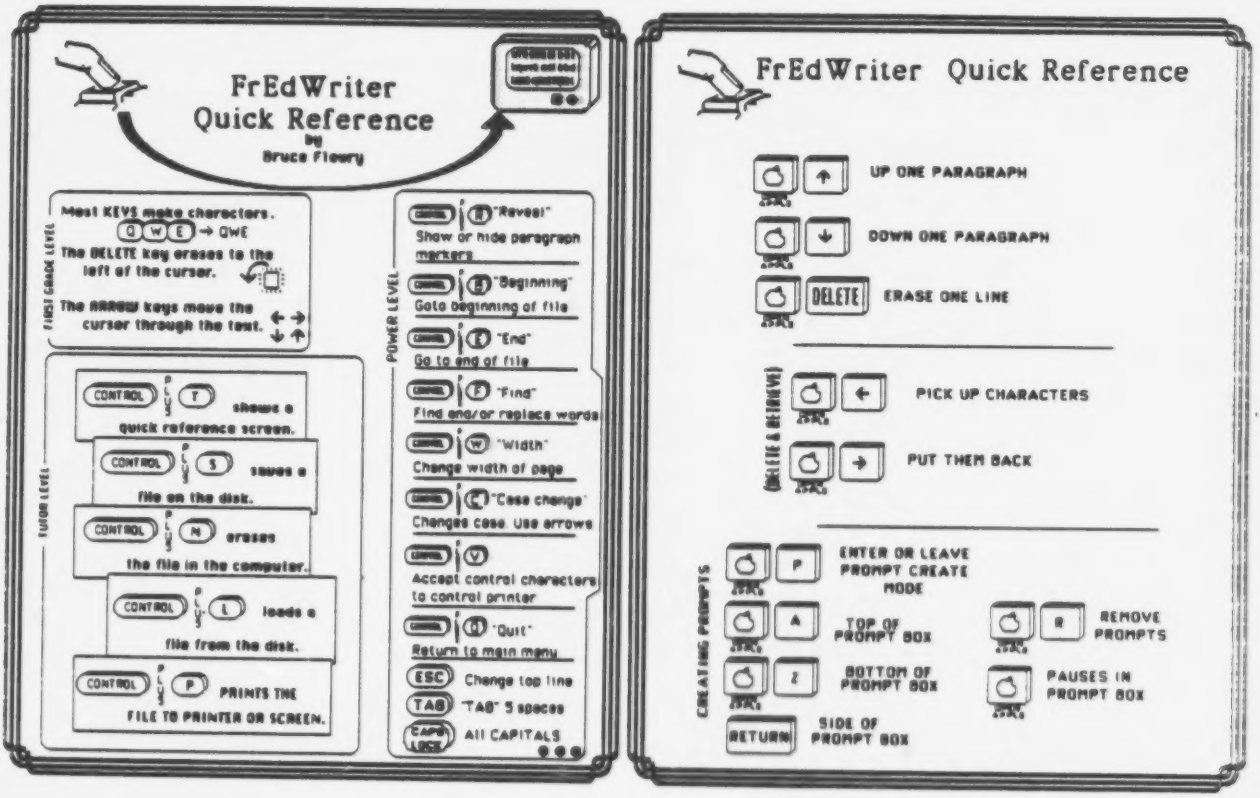
David Spangler
Towards a Planetary Vision

FrEd Writing

Bruce Fleury

FrEdWriter is a public domain word processor developed by educators for use in education. Bruce Fleury is the director of the project that developed **FrEdWriter**.

FrEdWriter was designed to be easy to use for both teachers and students in elementary and secondary school. The commands are simple and easy to remember; however, it has been helpful for those learning and teaching with FrEdWriter to have a quick reference card. Duplicate the card below and keep a copy at each computer.


FrEdWriter
Quick Reference
by
Bruce Fleury
Most KEYS make characters.
Q W E → QWE
The DELETE key erases to the left of the cursor.
The ARROW keys move the cursor through the text.
FIRST GRADE LEVEL
TUTOR LEVEL
CONTROL T shows a quick reference screen.
CONTROL S saves a file on the disk.
CONTROL N erases the file in the computer.
CONTROL L loads a file from the disk.
CONTROL P PRINTS THE FILE TO PRINTER OR SCREEN.
POWER LEVEL
CONTROL R "Reveal" Show or hide paragraph markers
CONTROL B "Beginning" Goto beginning of file
CONTROL E "End" Go to end of file
CONTROL F "Find" Find and/or replace words
CONTROL W "Width" Change width of page
CONTROL C "Case change" Changes case. Use arrows
CONTROL V Accept control characters to control printer
CONTROL Q "Quit" Return to main menu
ESC Change top line
TAB "TAB" 5 spaces
CAPS LOCK All CAPITALS
FrEdWriter Quick Reference
UP ONE PARAGRAPH
DOWN ONE PARAGRAPH
DELETE ERASE ONE LINE
(DELETE & RETRIEVE)
PICK UP CHARACTERS
PUT THEM BACK
CREATING PROMPTS
P ENTER OR LEAVE PROMPT CREATE MODE
A TOP OF PROMPT BOX
Z BOTTOM OF PROMPT BOX
RETURN SIDE OF PROMPT BOX
R REMOVE PROMPTS
PAUSES IN PROMPT BOX

56 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FrEd Writing

with
Bruce Fleury

Computer Organized Writing

In the last issue we saw one of the most powerful features of **FrEdWriter**—its ability to guide and organize student writing. Using **FrEdWriter**'s prompted writing techniques, teachers can create templates to guide student writing.

As you recall from the last issue, a template is a series of teacher-made questions or prompts that appear on the computer screen. A student responds to each prompt by writing at the keyboard. The student's writing appears on the screen along with the prompts. The prompts lead the student through writing steps designed by the teacher to produce a well organized draft. After the prompts have guided the student through the writing task, they disappear; the student's responses are printed without the prompts.

The use of such prompts allows students to practice writing within the structure and organization of the teacher-made template. The student can then read with pride his or her own well structured writing without the prompts. This can be a immense step toward building understanding and use of structure and organization in writing.

A template is made up of many prompts. Below is a sample of just one prompt (notice that the prompt is in a box) and the student's response.

```
SETTING: TELL IN WHAT PART OF THE
WORLD OR COUNTRY THIS STORY TAKES
PLACE. DESCRIBE IT.
```

THIS STORY TAKES PLACE IN BOTH ENGLAND AND ON THE ISLAND WHERE THE TREASURE IS HIDDEN, SKELETON ISLAND, IN ENGLAND. THE STORY BEGINS ON THE WEST COAST OF CORNWALL NEAR BRISTOL. THE ISLAND THEY GO TO IS IN THE CARIBBEAN.

Creating a Prompt

Let's create a prompt for students to write the date. After starting up **FrEdWriter**, observe the "Creating Prompts" quick reference card on the next page. Make a copy of this reference card, and use it whenever you want to make Computer Organized Writing templates.

Follow the steps on the quick reference card:

1. Hold down the **Open Apple** key and press "**P**." Note that **there is no screen change**, but you are now in a special "Prompt Create Mode."

2. Hold down the **Open Apple** key and press "**A**." This will give you the top of the prompt box. You will see a broad line 40 spaces long.

3. Press **Return** twice. This starts the side of the prompt box and then skips a line to make the directions easy to read. (A prompt box has only one side.)

4. Press **Tab** to make the left margin. Type the directions. Remember, we wanted the student to write the date in response to this prompt. So type "Write the date under this box."

5. Press **Return**. This ends the line and continues the left side of the box.

6. Hold down the **Open Apple** key and press "**Z**." This will give you the bottom of the prompt box. You will see a broad line 40 spaces long. Note: When you have directions that need more than one line, return to Step 4 before advancing to Step 6.

That's it! Repeat Steps 1 through 6 for each prompt you want to create. If you want to change a prompt, see "Editing Prompts" on the quick reference card. When you want a prompt to begin a new paragraph, press **Return** between prompt boxes.

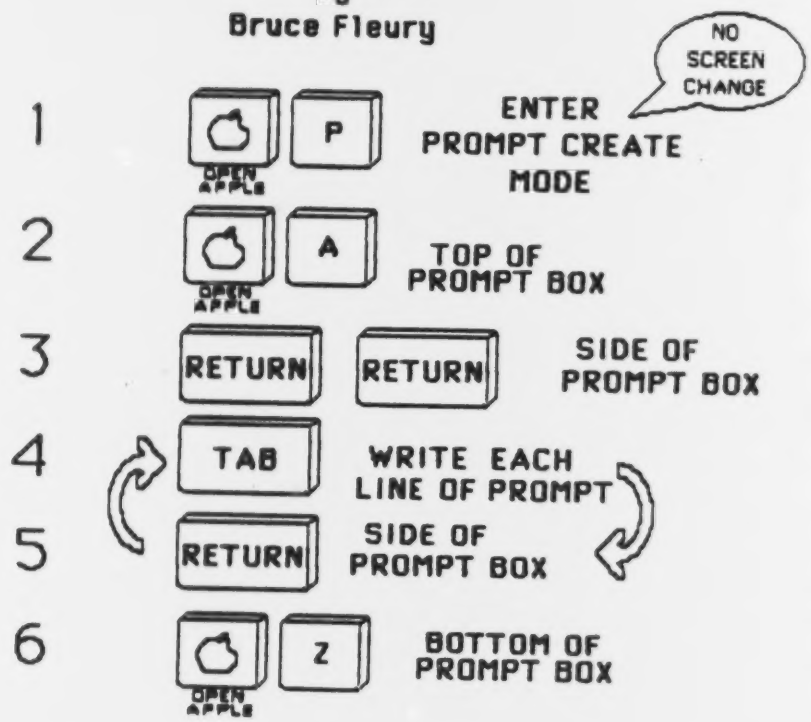
Save and load the template just as you would any **FrEdWriter** file. (Complete **FrEdWriter** instructions for are found in the documentation files on every **FrEdWriter** program disk.) ■

SOFTSWAP
P.O. Box 271704
Concord, CA 94527-1704
(415) 685-7265

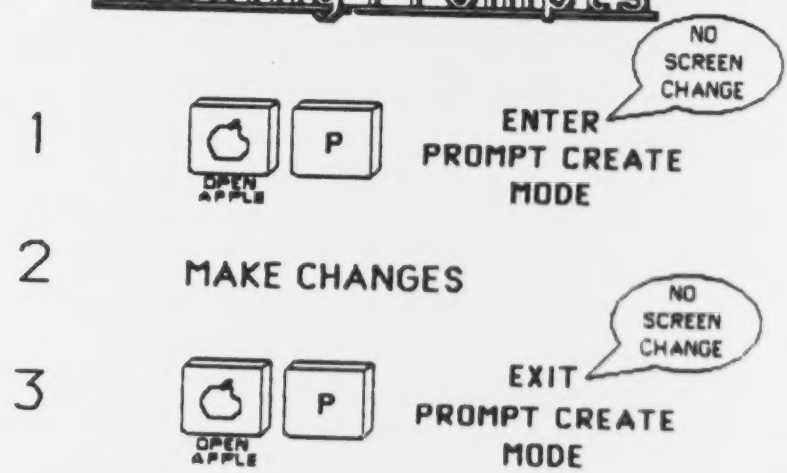
57

Creating Prompts

COMPUTER ORGANIZED WRITING
by
Bruce Fleury



Editing Prompts



58

FrEd Typer

with

Bruce Fleury

**Use your computer to teach typing skills.
Try this new public domain disk with 40 typing lessons—
"templates" that will guide your students
through touch typing practice.**

In an earlier issue we saw one of the most powerful features of FrEdWriter, its ability to guide and organize student writing. By using FrEdWriter's *prompted writing* techniques, you can create templates to guide student writing (see FrEd Writing with Bruce Fleury, Jan/Feb 1987).

Computer Using Educators Inc. offers a new SoftSwap disk with 40 touch typing templates for use with FrEdWriter. These touch typing lessons were developed as part of an educational technology grant from the State of California. Dr. Gary Carnow, Raymond Chavez, and Gail Lovely wrote the lessons using the prompted writing feature of FrEd Writer.

To use FrEd Typer, the student first boots FrEdWriter in 40 column mode, then loads a lesson from the FrEd Typer disk. The lesson appears on the screen in the form of a Computer Organized Writing template. The directions and models on the screen lead the student through touch typing practice. I recommend that the teacher check student work directly on the screen, but a hard copy may be printed if needed. Detailed instructions accompany the disk.

A FrEd Typer Quick Reference card can be found on the following page. Copy it and keep it near the computers where FrEd Typer will be in use.

For information on how to obtain FrEd Typer and FrEdWriter, write to:

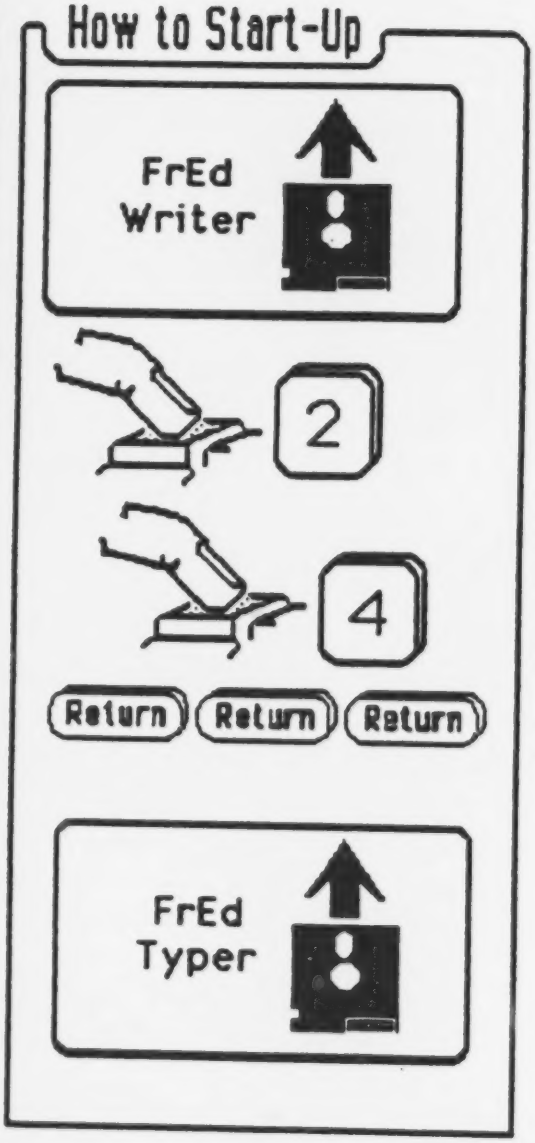
SoftSwap
P.O. Box 271704
Concord, CA 94527-1704
415/328-2248.

You may make multiple copies of SoftSwap disks for educational purposes.

FrEdTyper Quick Reference

By
Bruce Fleury

How to Start-Up

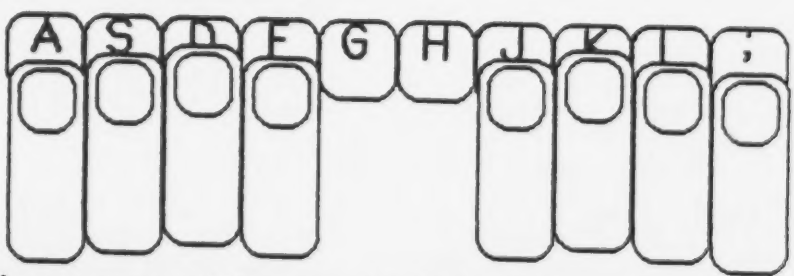


Hold Control, type L.
Type the name of a lesson

L1 or
L2 or
L3 or
: or
: or
L40

(There are 40 lessons)

Press Return,
follow the directions
in the boxes.



Keep your fingers in this home position.

FrEd Writing: Computer Organized Writing for Kindergarten

Bruce Fleury

How to make easy templates for kindergarten students— computer-based language arts activities designed for two people at the keyboard, a kindergarten student and someone to assist.

In previous issues of The Writing Notebook we investigated *FrEd Writer*'s powerful prompted writing techniques; that is, its ability to guide and organize student writing. By using *FrEd Writer*'s prompted writing techniques, teachers can create templates for any subject area, including a book report template for high school students or an elementary school science report. In recent collaboration with Jane Lee, the kindergarten mentor teacher for our school district, we developed prompted writing templates that support the district kindergarten language arts curriculum.

From earlier discussions in this column, you will recall that a template is a series of teacher-made questions or prompts that appear on the computer screen. A student responds to each prompt by writing at the keyboard. The student's writing appears on the screen along with the prompts, which lead the student through writing activities designed by the teacher.

What follows is a step-by-step account of the creation of one of our templates for kindergarten students. Use it as a guide to create your own kindergarten prompted writing templates.

To begin, Jane first referred to the kindergarten language arts curriculum guides used in our district. We looked for learning objectives that could be approached through prompted writing activities. Jane decided on a matching exercise. We wanted the kindergarten students to recognize certain symbols, numbers, and letters in a pattern and to reproduce those patterns on the computer screen by using the keyboard. We also wanted our template to display each pattern and provide a place for the student to reproduce it.

The first prompt was addressed, not to the kindergarten student, but to the assistant. We have found that third or fourth grade students make excellent kindergarten assistants. Other possible assistants are parent volunteers and teacher aides.

Our first prompt looked like this:

```
DEAR COMPUTER TUTOR,
ASK YOUR KINDERGARTEN STUDENT TO
LOOK AT THE LETTERS AND SYMBOLS
IN EACH BOX AND COPY THEM
UNDER THE BOX.
```

Creating a Prompt

Now, let's create a prompt together. We'll make a prompt for students to match. The prompt box will display this pattern:

@!@!@! @!@!@!

After starting up *FrEd Writer*, follow these steps:

1. Hold down the **Open Apple** key and press "P." You are now in a special "Prompt Create Mode."

2. Hold down the **Open Apple** key and press "A." This will give you the top of the prompt box. You will see a broad line 40 spaces long.

3. Press **Return** twice. This starts the side of the prompt box and then skips a line to make the directions easy to read. (A prompt box has only one side.)

4. Press **Tab** to make the left margin. Type the pattern. Remember, we want the student to match a symbol pattern in response to this prompt. So type "**@!@!@! @!@!@!**".

5. Press **Return**. This ends the line and continues the left side of the box.

6. Hold down the Open Apple key and press "Z." This will give you the bottom of the prompt box. You will see a broad line 40 spaces long. Note: When you have prompts that need more than one line, return to Step 4 before advancing to Step 6.

That's it! Repeat Steps 1 through 6 for each prompt you want to create. This is what the completed template looked like:

```
DEAR COMPUTER TUTOR,
ASK YOUR KINDERGARTEN STUDENT TO
LOOK AT THE LETTERS AND SYMBOLS
IN EACH BOX AND COPY THEM
UNDER THE BOX.

@#@#@#    @#@#@#

#S#S#S    #S#S#S

&+&+&+    &+&+&+

&*&*&*    &*&*&*

^&^&^&    !@!@!@

242424    242424

151515    898989

@#@#@#    @#@#@#

575757    575757

898989    989898

COCOCO    COCOCO

GAGAGA    DSDSDS
```

If you want to change a prompt, follow these steps:

1. Hold down the Open Apple key and press "P." You are in "Prompt Edit Mode."

2. Use the arrow keys to move into the prompt box. Make changes.

3. Use the arrow keys to move out of the prompt box.

4. Hold down the Open Apple key and press "P." You are out of "Prompt Edit Mode."

5. Repeat Steps 1 through 4 for each prompt that you want to change.

Save your Computer Organized Writing template just as you would any *FrEd Writer* file. To use your kindergarten template, load it for each kindergarten student just as you would load any *FrEd Writer* file. (Complete instructions for *FrEd Writer* are found in the documentation files on every *FrEd Writer* program disk.)

[For information about how to obtain FrEd Writer, *write to: SoftSwap, P.O. Box 271704, Concord, CA 94527-1704; ph. 415/328-2248. You may make multiple copies of SoftSwap disks for educational purposes.]*

Writing with the Turtle

Judy Bachman

"LogoWriter, particularly in the primary grades, offers a great opportunity to make that reading/writing connection, and to make learning to read FUN! And for older students with more programming capabilities, LogoWriter combines programmability, data base capabilities and text manipulation in a way that makes writing truly an exciting event for teachers and students!"

Up until now, for better or worse, we've created nice, neat catagories for Logo and for word processing.

Logo: a mathematically rich programming and problem solving environment.

Word processing: perhaps the easiest and most logical way, particularly for teachers new to computing, to use computers with their students.

And all too often if a choice is to be made because of a limited budget, word processing is chosen over Logo.

Until **LogoWriter**, that is.

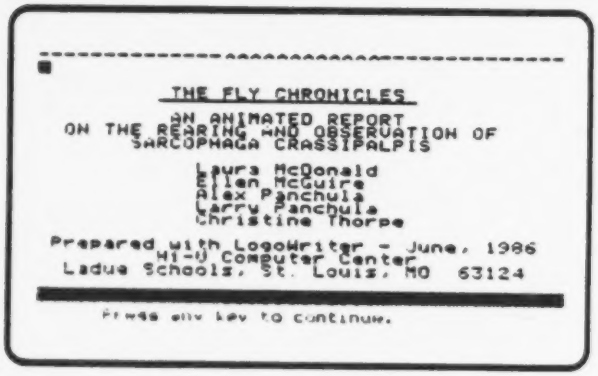
LogoWriter allows writing in any subject area to come alive and to unfold with text, graphics and sound that can appear, disappear, move and change at the discretion of the author. The "no threshold, no ceiling" philosophy of Logo is even more evident in **LogoWriter**. The saving and recalling of text and graphics is extremely easy, allowing even very young children to build and print their pictures and text. The use of **LogoWriter**, particularly in the primary grades, offers a great opportunity to make that reading/writing connection, and to make learning to read FUN! And for older students with more programming capabilities, **LogoWriter** combines programmability, data base capabilities and text manipulation in a way that makes writing truly an exciting event for teachers and students!

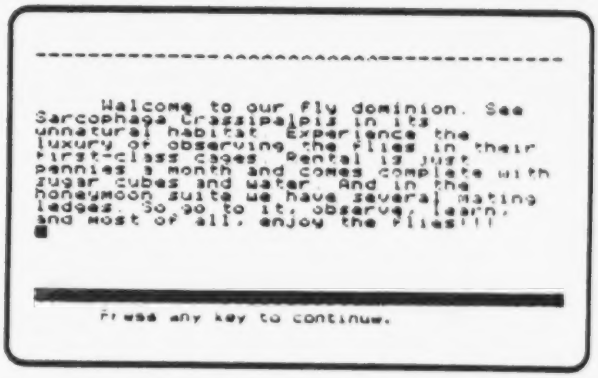
Report Writing Transformed

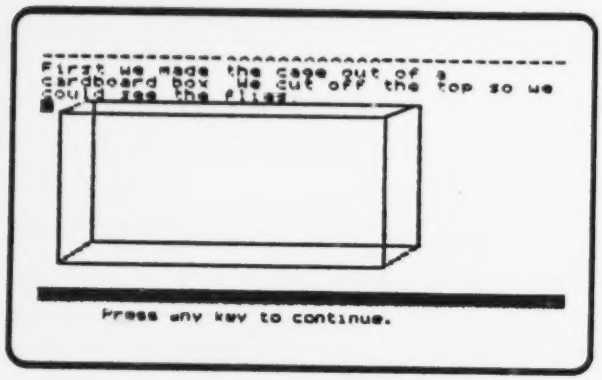
Marion Rosen, a gifted education and computer resource teacher in Ladue, Missouri, used **LogoWriter** with a group of sixth graders as the culmination of a unit on the life cycle and breeding habits of the Sargophaga Crassipalpis fly.

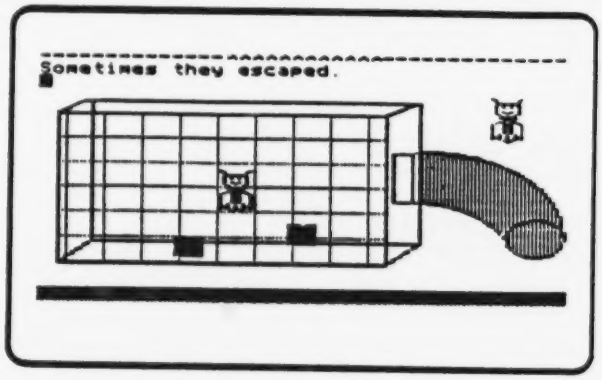
Imagine yourself as the "reader" of this report. Instead of simply wading through a six- to eight-page report, you can learn step by step how to build the breeding cages, while at the same time seeing the construction unfold on the screen.

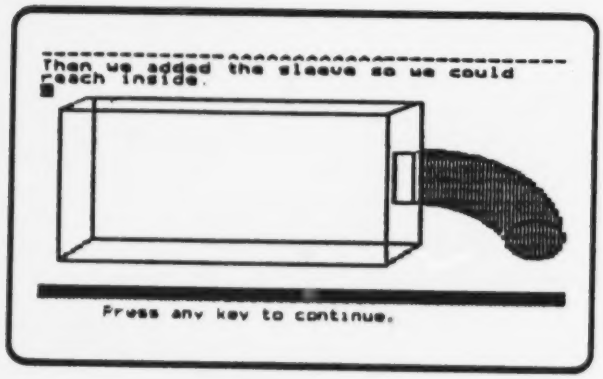
Here is a sample of the opening screens. (Remember, of course, that you are now reading "dead" text and are missing all the sound effects and action of the hidden turtle building the cage.)

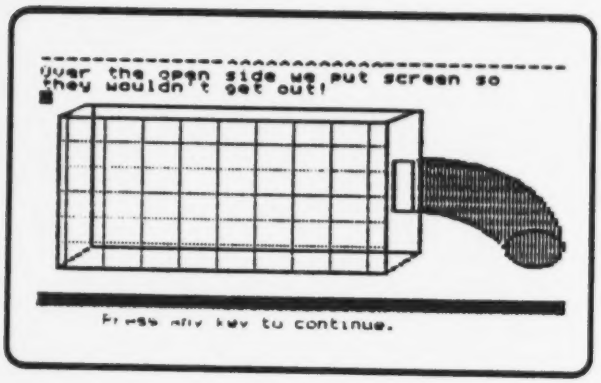


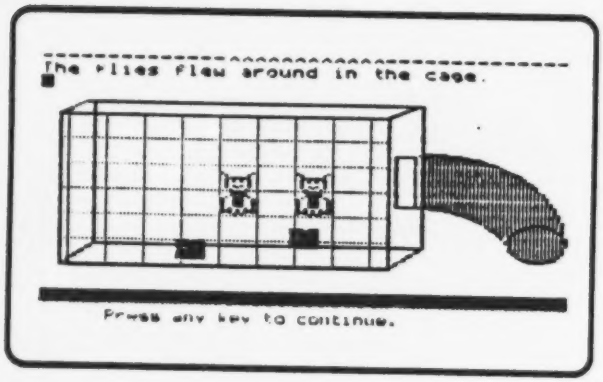

Welcome to our fly dominion. See Sarcophaga Crassipalpis in its unnatural habitat. Experience the luxury of observing the flies in their first-class cages. Rental is just pennies a month and comes complete with sugar cubes and water. And in the honeymoon suite we have several mating ledges. So go to it: observe, learn, and most of all, enjoy the flies!!!
Press any key to continue.









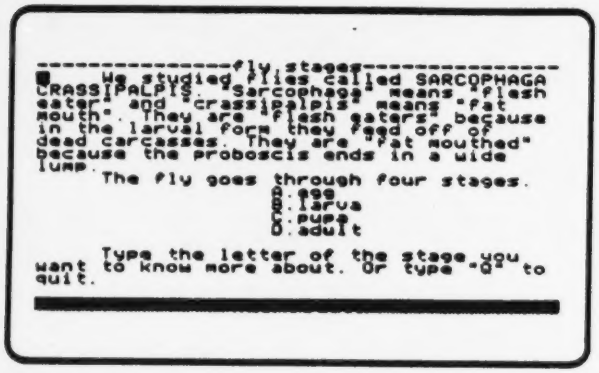


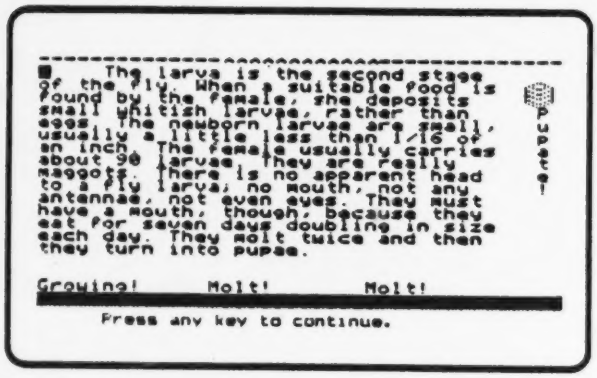
The next screen presents you with choices about what you'd like to learn next about the Sargophaga Crassipalpis fly. If a certain key is pressed, you can read about the stages of development of this insect. When the "B" (larva stage) is selected from this data base, the text screen appears, and an informative report on the larva of the fly is presented. While reading, you will become aware of the larva emerging and "wumping" (no kidding, that's what it sounds like) across the bottom of the screen. The word "growing" is stamped across the screen to remind you of the current process. As this worm-like object continues across the screen, it suddenly stops, the word "Molt" flashes, and suddenly there is a larger larva moving with deeper sounding "wumps." Another molting, deeper "wumps," a larger larva, and it continues up the screen (most of us reading this report were completely hysterical by this time). As it reaches the top of the screen, the word "PUPATE!" flashes (and screams), appears and disappears letter by letter, and then the pupa appears.

Now all is quiet, and you have no choice but to "PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE." This returns you to the data base selection screen, with the opportunity to learn more about the life cycle of this fly, or to QUIT.

Quitting does not simply return you to a blank screen, however. Instead, a grand finale is presented with music, flies buzzing, and a polite message about the knowledge and enjoyment that the authors hope you have received from this report.

The organization, knowledge and programming abilities exhibited by these student authors is impressive. But interestingly enough, the most valuable and impressive outcome reported by the teacher was the collaboration of the students in creating this report. The discussions and arguments that occurred, and the ideas bouncing around in the room (and probably outside, as well) were really exciting. Isn't that what learning is all about?


fly stages
We studied flies called SARCOPHAGA CRASSIPALPIS. "Sarcophaga" means "flesh eater" and "crassipalpis" means "fat mouth". They are "flesh eaters" because in the larval form they feed off of dead carcasses. They are "fat mouthed" because the proboscis ends in a wide lump.
The fly goes through four stages.
A:egg
B:larva
C:pupa
D:adult
Type the letter of the stage you want to know more about. Or type "Q" to quit.


The larva is the second stage of the fly. When a suitable food is found by the female, she deposits small whitish larvae, rather than eggs. The newborn larvae are small, usually a little less than 1/16 of an inch. The female usually carries about 90 larvae. They are really maggots. There is no apparent head to a fly larva; no mouth, not any antennae, not even eyes. They must have a mouth, though, because they eat for seven days doubling in size each day. They molt twice and then they turn into pupae.
Pupae!
Growing!
Molt!
Molt!
Press any key to continue.

This project obviously was not done by beginners. The teacher is a remarkable person as well as a very experienced and capable Logo programmer. The students are not beginners either, and are also very bright and capable. I selected this project to share with **THE WRITING NOTEBOOK** readers in order to demonstrate the potential of **LogoWriter**.

The beauty of **LogoWriter**, however, is that it is easy for a beginner to have wonderful results. Next time I'll share some work done during summer computer camp by children entering first grade this fall, including some children who have been diagnosed as disabled.

Think About . . . .

LogoWriter and Poetry - Can you imagine how an author can allow his or her words to unfold in the same rhythm as the Haiku?

LogoWriter and Book Reports - Finally an end to the boring book report syndrome!

LogoWriter and the Beginning Reader - Language experience teachers will be especially interested in this.

LogoWriter and the Special Child - Especially for children with communication disorders....

LogoWriter and ???????? - The possibilities are limited only by one's imagination.

Getting Started

Before I give you the vitals concerning **LogoWriter**, I should explain a site license. When a school purchases **LogoWriter**, the site license allows the school to make as many copies as is necessary for students and faculty. For an additional fee, a copy can also be sent home with any student who has an Apple or IBM at home.

LCSI (Logo Computer Systems Inc.)
555 W. 57th Street, Suite 1236
New York, NY 10019
ph. 212/247-0444

LogoWriter Site License - $395.
Extension License - additional $150.

With this license comes a **LogoWriter** newsletter and opportunities for teacher training at various locations around the country. (Call LCSI for more information).

Teacher training videotapes on Logo are available through a company called Media Microworlds, Inc. This company was started by a school administrator who was frustrated by the lack of quality teacher training materials for school districts wishing to use Logo. These tapes feature Seymour Papert, considered the "father of the Logo language." They show not only the "how to" programming aspects of the language, but the process of teaching and learning within a Logo environment. Two of these videotapes deal specifically with **LogoWriter**. For more information and prices, write or call:

Media MicroWorlds Inc.
12 Clayton Terrace
St. Louis, MO 63131
ph. 314/567-0150

[Judy Bachman, 7926 Gannon, St. Louis, MO 63130.]

"Easing" into LogoWriter

Judy Bachman

LogoWriter Is EASY!

I know it did not look easy in the last issue. The full capabilities of **LogoWriter**—text, graphics, animation, sound, interaction, data base, etc.—were presented in the animated fly report.

But it is easy, as I hope to prove to you in this issue. Even beginners who know very little about Logo can create an impressive product. This simple beginning will allow teachers and children to ease themselves into using **Logo-Writer**. And before you know it, students will be "programming"—and creating projects like the one in the November/December issue.

LogoWriter Is Magic!

The dictionary gives one definition of magic as "a mysterious quality of enchantment."

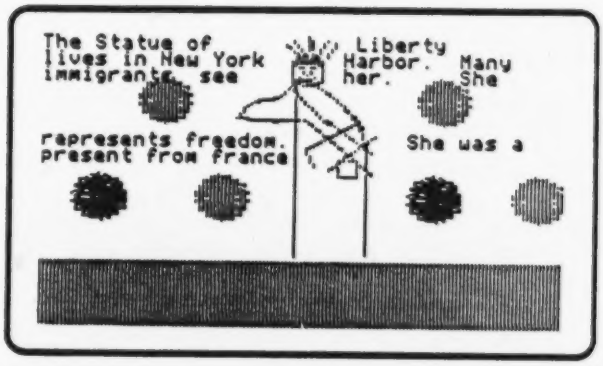
In working with teachers and children this fall, I find that **LogoWriter** truly enchants teachers, as well as children, with its magic. Teachers who were apprehensive about using Logo are excitedly coming up with one project idea after another.

Holidays are Magic!

Teachers know of the magic of holidays to evoke children's imaginations and creativity. We have capitalized on this magic by using holidays as a vehicle to study history, customs, vocabulary, poetry, cooperation—anything that we can slip in. You will see that LogoWriter + Holidays = Wonderful Things!

Lady Liberty

What an evocative object, this majestic lady in New York Harbor! All the excitement about her anniversary last July captured the imagination of one little person during computer camp this summer.



Alison Gordon
Ladue District Hi-U Summer Camp

This project was done in a summer computer camp by a kindergarten child (entering first grade in the fall). It was a project that evolved slowly during the two weeks of camp, as the group learned new things. During the transfer from this child's imagination to the computer screen, the graphics came first, with the text the final and crowning glory to this wonderful project. The class had worked in independent sessions to learn:

Drawing with the turtle—forward, back, right, left (which evoked the colorful fireworks and body of the lady in Alison's mind)

Setting a new shape for the turtle—setshape # (Miss Liberty's face)

Writing text—Apple key and U (to move "up" to the text screen from the command center)

This project was all Alison's, but it was made less frustrating and more possible by the small student/teacher ratio of the summer camp (6 to 1).

How do you accomplish something like this with only one teacher and 25 students?

Halloween Beginnings

Young children are remarkably resourceful. Thus, they are not inhibited by not knowing how to spell or punctuate—things they will be taught later on. Amy's work is an example of uninhibited inspiration.

Her class had been working with **LogoWriter** since the beginning of school. The sequence of learning went something like this:

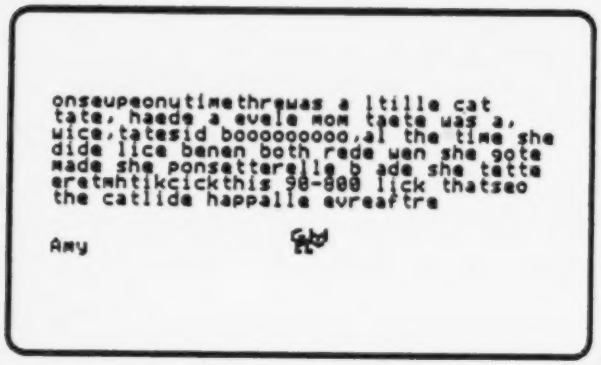
First, the class learned the turtle graphics commands forward, back, right, and left. They had ample time to play with the turtle at the two computers located at the back of their classroom.

Next, they learned how to "wake-up" the word cursor at the top of the turtle's work page. They practiced writing words, letters, numbers, etc.

They then learned how to name a page for saving. Up until this time, much to their disappointment, nothing had been saved. Naming a page was the most difficult task so far, because they needed to manipulate the shift key to print the quote mark: np "name (np stands for namepage). But the carrot was dangling. The class loved the turtle, and through much collaborative effort, everyone managed to name a page. Those who succeeded helped those who were still struggling. When the page was named, it was a simple matter of pressing the ESC key to save. Motivation was high. They all wanted to print their work.

Halloween was approaching, so it seemed a good time to introduce turtle "costumes." The command was simple—setsh (setshape) and a number. The idea of the turtle dressing up in a Halloween costume intrigued these first graders.

The result is Amy's story, which just flowed (obviously without any teacher interference). She is delighted with the turtle, its costumes, and the words she can make.

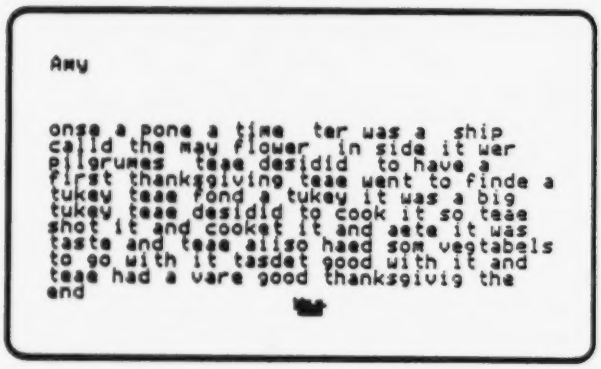

onseupeonytimethrewas a ltille cat
tate, haede a evele mom taete was a,
wice,tatesid booooooooo,al the time she
dide lice benen both rede wen she gote
made she ponsetterelle b ade she tatte
eretmhtikcickthis 90-800 lick thatseo
the catlide happalle evreaftre
Amy

Amy Clark, Grade 1
Conway School, Ladue School District

Amy willingly read her story to me, and I offer you this translation:

Once upon a time there was a little cat that had an evil mom that was a witch that said boo all the time. She didn't like being bothered. When she got mad, she (got) punished really bad. She thought arithmetic like this 90-100 like that. So the cat lived happily ever after.

This **LogoWriter** experience is a magnet to all of the children. When their turn comes, they are ready with their ideas, as they know their time is limited. Some stick more to the graphics capabilities of **LogoWriter**, while others love the stories that they can create. Whatever the attraction, it must make them more aware of words and ideas as evidenced by Amy's latest creation, inspired by a turkey "costume" and the children's study of the First Thanksgiving. (No translation needed this time.)


Amy
onse a pone a time ter was a ship
calld the may flower in side it wer
pilgrumas teae desidid to have a
first thanksgiving teae went to finde a
tukey teae fond a tukey it was a big
tukey teae desidid to cook it so teae
shot it and cooket it and aete it was
taste and teae aiiso haed som vegtabels
to go with it tasdet good with it and
teae had a vare good thanksgiviig the
end

Amy Clark, Grade 1
Conway School, Ladue School District

Thanksgiving Rebuses

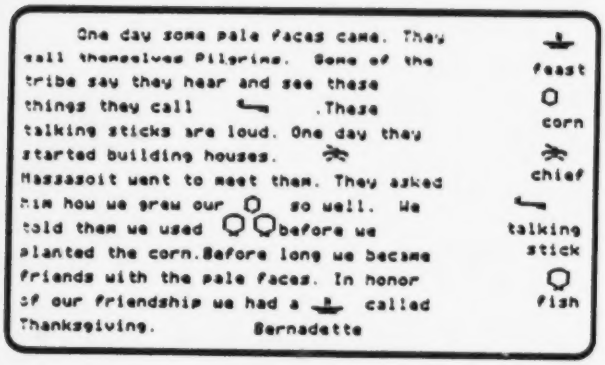
A more sophisticated writing project using **LogoWriter** was completed by a fourth grade class under the direction of their teacher, Denise Ford. The products are outstanding, both in looks and in the quality of the writing. The looks came easily using **LogoWriter**. The writing was motivated by an experienced, expressive teacher through prewriting experiences.

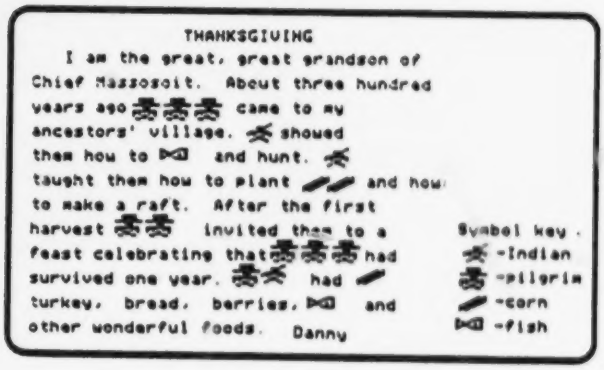
In the first grade **LogoWriter** examples, the graphics inspired the words. The fourth graders wrote the story first on the **LogoWriter** work page, and then created their pictures to replace some of the words.

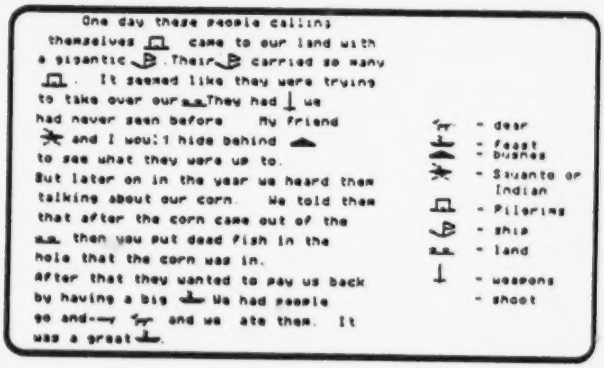
These pictures are easily designed shapes or "costumes," which were put into the shape editor. The words were then deleted and replaced with a "stamp" of this shape.

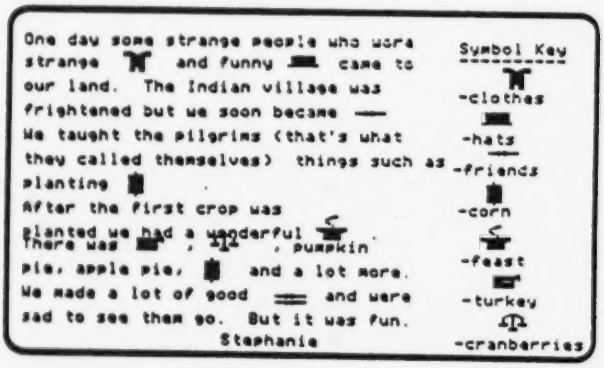
67

No programming was necessary! Everything was done in the "Immediate" mode and saved by simply naming the page. These rebuses, created by students at Spoede School, could easily be done by any third or fourth grade class with very little LogoWriter experience.


One day some pale faces came. They
call themselves Pilgrims. Some of the
tribe say they hear and see these
things they call .These
talking sticks are loud. One day they
started building houses.
Massasoit went to meet them. They asked
him how we grew our so well. We
told them we used before we
planted the corn.Before long we became
friends with the pale faces. In honor
of our friendship we had a called
Thanksgiving. Bernadette
feast
corn
chief
talking stick
fish




One day these people calling
themselves came to our land with
a gigantic . Their carried so many
. It seemed like they were trying
to take over our They had we
had never seen before My friend
and I would hide behind
to see what they were up to.
But later on in the year we heard them
talking about our corn. We told them
that after the corn came out of the
then you put dead fish in the
hole that the corn was in.
After that they wanted to pay us back
by having a big We had people
go and and we ate them. It
was a great
- deer
- feast
- bushes
- Squanto or Indian
- Pilgrims
- ship
- land
- weapons
- shoot



Getting Started

I hope these simple projects have convinced you that even the novice LogoWriter user can get children started on using this wonderful tool. You don't have to be an expert before you start using it with your class.

Start with something simple. Learn how to use the shapes to adorn a piece of writing. Before you know it, you'll be an old hand, inspiring and leading children in all sorts of creative projects. Don't forget to send those projects to this column so that they can be shared with everyone! ■

The Milliken Word Processor Reproducible Writing Outlines

Irene and Owen Thomas, Authors
Todd Huck, Writing Consultant

The activities reprinted here are part of a series of 60 Outlines that accompany *The Writing Workshop* by Milliken. Many thanks to Irene Thomas for allowing us to reprint these activities in The Writing Notebook.

IN OTHER WORDS ...

A. The mood and meaning of a piece can be strengthened or changed by SUBSTITUTION. To substitute, replace the plain words and phrases that you use all of the time with ones that are more clear, lively, and exact.

1. Read the story below. Imagine a specific reader for the story. Describe that reader in a few words on the lines below.

_____

_____

_____

2. In the following paragraph, cross out the words in italics. Write more interesting or specific words or phrases above them. Think about the reader for this piece. Try to appeal to that reader's personality.

The *old person went* into the *room*. The room was *not warm*. On one wall were *some* shelves filled with *things*. *Light came* in through a *big* bay window, and *some* dust *was* in the beam of light. In a *dark* corner *was* an *old clock* that *made some sounds*. The *colored* carpet was *not clean*, and from a *piece of furniture* came an *unpleasant smell*. The hands of the *person* in the doorway began *to move*. Suddenly a *sound* came from *somewhere*.

Add a sentence here.

_____

_____

PUTTING IT ANOTHER WAY

A. Sometimes your writing will make more sense and flow more smoothly when you move around some of your ideas. The following paragraph has good opening and closing sentences, but the sentences in between need to be rearranged in a more sensible order.

1. Read all the sentences. Then number them in the order in which you think they should go.

   HINT: Group ideas that seem to go together, first.

This had been the worst day that Sandy could remember.

____ She raced out the front door just in time to see the bus pull away from the corner.

____ All the homework she had done so carefully the night before was soaked.

____ By the time she reached the covered hallway, the rain had become a downpour, and Sandy was dripping wet.

____ It started when she awoke at 7:45 and realized, in a panic, that she had forgotten to set her alarm.

____ Next a strap on one of her shoes broke, and she had to wear her old sneakers that were full of holes.

____ Since her mother had already gone to work, Sandy had no choice but to walk to school.

____ She picked up her ruined notebook and began again the long journey to school.

____ Her English teacher glared at her and said, "Sandy, you are twenty minutes late. Please see me after class."

____ School began at 8:00, and Sandy knew she would never make it on time.

____ Sandy began to jog the two miles to school, but when she reached the end of the first block, her notebook fell from her hands and landed open in the gutter.

____ When Sandy was just a block from school, she heard a peal of thunder, and it began to rain.

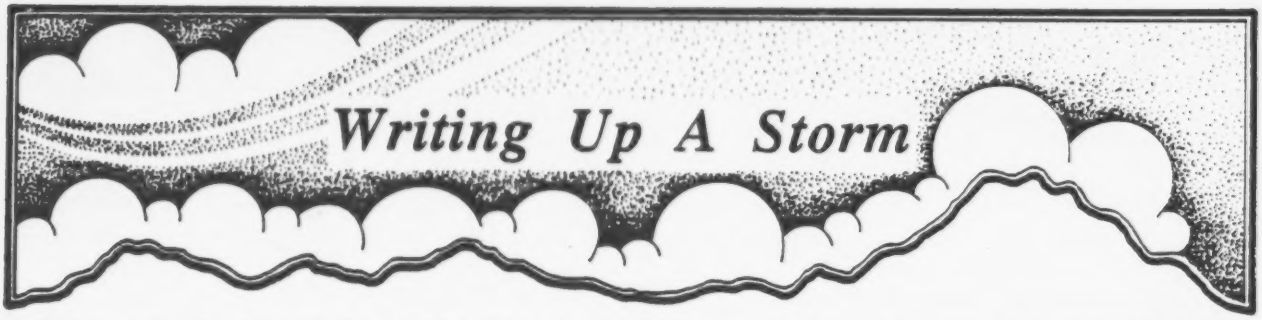
____ Looking like a drenched mop, Sandy opened the door of her first period classroom.

____ While she was getting dressed, the zipper broke on her dress and she had to change clothes.

Sandy glanced at the clock on the classroom wall and thought, "What else can go wrong?"

2. Now read the sentences in their new order to see if any more changes are necessary. Remember, there is no one correct order, but some arrangements of sentences do work better than others.

An Activity for THE WRITING WORKSHOP—



This lesson can be done on the chalkboard, with paper and pencil, as word processing files (see Teacher's Activities for details), or with the Prewriting disks that accompany Milliken's The Writing Workshop.

Student Outline

As you probably know, the hardest part of the writing process is often figuring out where to begin. One quick way to get started and to find out what you know about a topic is to write down everything the topic makes you think of—as fast as you can. Don't stop to worry about whether or not your ideas are good or bad. And don't stop to worry about spelling and punctuation. This rapid listing of ideas is often called brainstorming. You can even use brainstorming to generate an interesting topic when you don't have one.

1. For the next five minutes, write down every word or phrase you can think of when you see the word **HOT**.

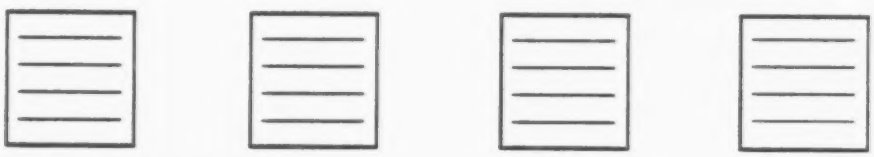
   _____ _____ _____
   _____ _____ _____
   _____ _____ _____

2. Now read the following questions. If they give you any ideas you didn't have before, add them to your brainstorming list.

   Does the word **HOT** make you think of . . .
   - emotions or feelings? - people or places? - certain types of food? - tastes or flavors?
   - smells, sounds, sights, colors? - certain times of the day or year?

3. Suppose you were going to write a short piece called **HOT**. Which words and phrases would you use from your list? Circle them.

4. Now think about which words and phrases might go together in groups. Try to make at least four groups using boxes like the ones below.



5. Give a name to each group, and write it above the group.

NOW you have something to start thinking about. Suppose you choose to write a paragraph about one of your groups of ideas. What might you say in your first sentence (topic sentence) as an introduction to your paragraph? Write a possible sentence below.

_____.

Teacher Activities

This lesson introduces students to the technique of brainstorming as an idea-generator that utilizes word association. Students who have never done this kind of activity might need some prompting and a reminder not to judge their items on the first round. The second step is to make selections followed by some rough "grouping" of selected items.

This lesson is particularly well suited to working in pairs or small groups.

1. Adapt this student activity for the computer by entering the topic **HOT** and a brief set of instructions for brainstorming, including a time limit and a reminder not to judge the words yet. When time is up, they may keep the words they like best and delete others. Occasionally you may want to encourage students to do freewriting at this stage; that is, allow them to write a fluency draft right after brainstorming without requiring deliberate grouping first. This is a first step in selecting details based on the writer's preference alone. Have them save their work on a file called "Hot."

   The brainstorming diskette, of course, provides a utility which expedites freewriting and follows it with grouping and naming groups. (See notes to the Brainstorming diskette for other suggestions.)

2. If you wish, have students go back to their brainstorms and write a paragraph based on one of their groups. Asking them to write their opening sentence, as they did in the student activity, will help them to focus on their topic and purpose. Their paragraphs should be saved on the same file with the brainstorm, so that they may consult it or revise it as needed.

   Older or more experienced writers could be encouraged to write a multiparagraph essay, based on all their notes.

3. Consider the following stimulus words for additional brainstorming:

EMPTY	BLUE	ANGER
TREE	MUSIC	DOOR
ALONE	STAR	FUNNY
WAIT	SPRING	RUN

Tailoring Stories into Plays with *Story Tailor*

Jon Madian

Education is initiation into and through cultural forms. Good education uses the best cultural vehicles—well-written stories, plays, and poems—to engage people of all ages in learning.

Story Tailor presents these three types of literature in a new, electronic form. In *Story Tailor*, the stories, plays, and poems are personalized by a sophisticated list-handling program that inserts students' names into the text so they appear as the characters. Then, after their names are merged into the text, the students and/or teacher can revise the writing to fit their own unique setting, priorities, or imaginations. Educators wishing to use drama, choral readings, or other theatrical activities to involve their students will find a whole new world of school-related, word processor-supported literature from which to choose.

Below is an excerpt from the story, *El Monstruo at Kemble School*. This story about volcanoes extends the story developed in *Hill of Fire* (Harper Trophy Books), an ideal choice for third graders. *Hill of Fire* tells about the actual, recent birth of a volcano in a farmer's field in Mexico. *El Monstruo* elaborates upon this theme, but now, rather than the birth of the volcano occurring as a farmer plows his field, it takes place as the class plays kickball.

Note that in the excerpt from the story that follows, the *Story Tailor* program has inserted the name of the students and school for a particular third grade class in Sacramento, California.

EL MONSTRUO AT KEMBLE SCHOOL

Billy is on first base leaning toward second. Cindy is on second base leaning toward third. Raphael is on third base leaning toward home. Judy is up. Her foot paws the earth.

Rowena is on the mound. Her eyes meet Judy's. Rowena looks at Billy, Cindy, and Raphael. Then Rowena winds up and lets the pitch roll. It is fast and bumpy, bouncing in fast little hops. It spins and Judy knows it will curve. She moves toward it quickly, hoping to catch the ball as it rises on a hop.

Bam! The ball shoots into the air. It flies over Rowena's head, sails over Todd who is covering second, and soars over Denise's reaching arms.

"Home run! Home run! Yeah! We win!" cheer Alfredo, Tony, Sarah, and Beth, running forward to congratulate Billy, Cindy, Raphael, and Judy as they cross the plate.

Denise jogs tiredly after the ball. She throws it to Todd who relays it to Rowena. Rowena raises the ball in the air and shouts some words better left unsaid in this story. Then she throws the ball down with all her might.

"Where's the ball?" asks Robert, running from shortstop.

"Where's the ball?" asks Linda, coming in from third base.

Rowena's eyes and mouth are wide open.

"The ball went into the earth," she says, pointing toward a small hole in the very center of the pitcher's mound.

"Where's the ball?" asks Leanna, arriving from right field.

"It disappeared into that hole in the earth!" exclaim Robert and Linda.

"Into that hole?" asks Leanna, pointing.

"Look! The hole is smoking!" exclaims Denise.

"And the ground is shaking!" shouts Robert.

"El monstruo! El monstruo!" yell Linda, Robert, Leanna, Denise, and Rowena, running from the field.

The ground shakes and the air roars like thunder.

"El monstruo! El monstruo!" yell Billy, Cindy, Raphael, Judy, Tony, Sarah, Beth, and Todd, racing after the others.

This ends Chapter (or Act) One. The students will write what happens next. However, before they add to this story (or play), they would do well to read it like a play, having a narrator read the nonspoken lines. As the story is read in this manner, new ideas will emerge. It is likely that students will want to act the story out.

With *Story Tailor*, you may be surprised at how easily the gap between stories and plays—and between reading and writing—narrows.

[For further information about Story Tailor, contact Humanities Software, P.O. Box 950, Hood River, OR 97031.]

Middle School Writers—Using Bank Street Writer to Fuel the Writing Process

Wilma Weisenstein

Want to increase your middle school students' involvement and interest in the writing process? Try using computers and *Bank Street Writer III*.

Word processing supports writing instruction in a number of ways. During the prewriting stage, students can brainstorm, save, and print out lists of ideas in a free-flowing fashion. Composing may be done on screen or on paper, depending on the time and number of computers available. Support activities to be done on computer may be made easily, which reinforces specific skills such as sentence combining or transitions. (Students then are required to use that concept in a related writing assignment.) Revising is a much more popular activity when done on computer. In addition, students assist each other, often because curiosity leads them to look at what is on the screens around them. The final bonus of using a word processor in the writing process is the ability to publish instantly in many different formats—a tremendous motivator for students.

Writing Friendly Letters

Prewriting activities include a class discussion of the parts of a friendly letter and the location of each part. I use the blackboard or ditto to show students the exact location of the heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature, and then give each student a dittoed sheet of specific instructions on where to place each part using *Bank Street Writer*. When the assignment is completed and printed out, it is possible to tell at a glance if the writer followed directions; both the writing itself and the extent to which the writer followed the instructions are considered during evaluation.

Students begin by writing a letter to a tree. We go outside and each student chooses a tree. After reassembling as a group, we brainstorm questions we could ask a tree: How old are you? What have you seen while standing there? How are you affected by the weather? We also talk about what they want the tree to know such as why they chose that tree or feelings they want to share with the tree. If the weather prohibits students from going outside, they instead write letters to inanimate objects such as a trash can, pen, computer, or pair of shoes.

For this letter-writing activity I place my two classroom computers along the back wall of the room. Students sign up to use the computer; after showing me a handwritten rough draft, their names are placed on the waiting list. Two students are assigned to a computer at a time and allowed 15 to 20 minutes to type in their drafts. Later they are given an additional 10 to 15 minutes to revise and edit their letters. Sometimes I pair up students; other times they choose their own partners.

After typing, students save it and print one copy, which is edited with the partner. Later, when they return to the computer in pairs, students retrieve their letters, edit on screen, and print a final copy, which is displayed on the bulletin board.

For Part 2 of this assignment, students must write a 2- to

June 20, 1988

Dear Mr. Price,

In my opinion, the bill which would require students to attend school twelve months a year is not a good idea. The productivity of the students would decrease, and they would not work as willingly.

Students look forward to summer vacation. It gives them time to relax and enjoy life. If you don't give them something to look forward to, some will sort of give up on life. Also, if kids don't get a chance to enjoy life, they will never really live. A portion of those people will become workaholics.

You also might think that keeping the kids in school will keep them out of trouble. I don't think that's true. Summer vacation gives kids a chance to wind down from the pressures of school.

I hope you will take my letter into consideration. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Andi, gr. 7

74

3-paragraph friendly letter to the person of their choice. For this assignment, many students choose to become their tree and respond to the first letter. If they do, I take a picture of the student and his or her tree, displaying the photo along with the final copy of the letter. These letters are graded and the class decides on several "best" examples to save and use as models for future letter-writing, along with the directions and formatting instructions for *Bank Street Writer*.

Pass-It-On Story

This assignment is given as part of a short story unit, following a class discussion on the parts of a short story. Prewriting includes discussion of how a writer must tie a short story together, setting the stage, continuing the action while keeping to the original ideas, and how to conclude in a logical fashion.

For this activity I take my class to the computer lab, where 15 students can work at the computer at once. Before class I type an opening line for a different story on each screen, using *Bank Street Writer*. Each writer begins the story on the screen and writes for about 10 minutes. Students then move to a second computer, read what has been composed so far, and continue that second story. After another 10 minutes they move again, write, and move to a fourth computer. They must write the conclusion for the fourth story, save it, and print one copy. (I have also done this activity with two students at each computer. Both contribute ideas, while one student types. Each student has two opportunities to type during the composing stage.)

During the next class session we discuss transition words and phrases, using material from the English textbook. Students then complete a Transition lesson on the computer, which I adapted from the *Bank Street Writer* manual, meeting in groups of three to peer edit their story printouts. To each story, depending on the length, students must add three to five appropriate transition words or phrases. When students return to the lab, they retrieve the original story and edit on screen, with group members going from screen to screen to accomplish this task. During all sessions in the lab, I move from student to student, reading, offering suggestions, and helping with spelling and mechanics.

If students decide to make booklets, they design covers using *The Print Shop*. The finished books often are displayed in the classroom, library, and at the Fine Arts Fair; however, students may also share their writing by reading one of their stories aloud. During oral sharing, students listen for transitions, and we talk about the success of the writers in developing the beginning, middle, and end of each story.

Pass-It-On Story Starters

1. Everybody in the strange land of Nemna had one unusual feature.
2. The family who lived next door to old Mrs. Catskill would never forget the time she had . . . .
3. Hidden in the bottom of Granny's old trunk we found . . . .
4. On the top shelf on the locked closet were five small yellow bottles.
5. Captain Waterhouse thought the mystery would never be solved until he found the . . .
6. Only Vivian Masterson knew what was behind the locked iron door.
7. Buried deeply under the rock, I found . . . .
8. In the middle of the desert, Alexander found a cracked skull.
9. It was the strangest photograph I had ever seen.
10. The lonesome stranger rode into town at dusk.
11. On top of the hill stood a lonely, dark castle.
12. Sometimes when I hear the wind howling at night, I remember . . . .
13. When I opened the book, I discovered a strange message printed on page 10.
14. The headline in the newspaper read "14-YEAR-OLD GIRL DISCOVERS . . . ."

And of course,

15. It was a dark and stormy night.

> It was a dark and stormy night. The wind bent over even the largest of trees and the flowers in their beds lay down in agony from the large raindrops. It seemed as though this horrid night would never end. The old country estate would've been a perfect setting for a gruesome horror movie, thought Karen, as she gazed out of her bedroom window.
>
> —Sara, gr. 6

Using Transitions

Transitions Worksheet

When used as sentence starters, transition words and phrases help to move a story along and show the relationship among elements and ideas. Transition words and phrases show some kind of logical order, whether chronological time, order of importance, or steps in a process.

Below you are given groups of four or five transition words or phrases to help you begin to tell a very short story. Choose one group and begin your story with the first word or phrase. Continue the story, and try to make your plot lead you to the point where you can use the next sentence starter. Work your way through all the words or phrases in the group until you reach the end of your story.

Choose one of the groups below and type in your story:

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
First. . .	Far away. . .	To begin with. . .
Then. . .	Coming closer. . .	In addition. . .
After that. . .	Closer still. . .	Nevertheless. . .
Finally. . .	Face to face. . .	In spite of this. . .
		When all is said and done. . .

When you finish, do this activity again, choosing one of the other two groups. If you have questions, just raise your hand.

Designing a Successful Communication Skills Program

In order to design a successful communication skills program that includes word processing, several points should be noted:

1. Students need a few introductory lessons on using *Bank Street Writer*. I prefer to give the instructions myself, with students practicing as we go, rather than having students use the tutorial that comes with the program. Most of my students pick up these skills very quickly.
2. Students usually will need to write out a rough draft by hand, because composing at the computer typically takes too much time. Note also that arrangements must be made with a team member to monitor half the class while the other half is in the lab.
3. Students learn to type as part of our eighth grade communication skills program. I am particularly concerned that, as the year progresses, students apply correct keyboarding skills as they complete their word processing assignments.
4. Because of computer lab time constraints, students may complete only four or five pieces on the computer. At this point my biggest challenge is how to teach approximately 125 eighth grade students to use word processing and provide them with sufficient time to practice and use this skill in a building where another 350 students must use these same computers.

[Wilma Weisenstein, 116 Twin Lake Dr., Belleville, IL 62221.]

WRITING SKILLS WITH WRITE ON!

Jon Madian

WRITE ON! from Humanities Software is a collection of 54 writing activity disks designed to use word processing functions (insert, delete, block, move, display, print) to develop composing, revising and editing skills at grades K–12. All major areas of written language development are addressed: story, poetry, letter, journal, report and essay writing. While these activities-on-disk are designed to involve students in whole language behaviors, specific mechanical, vocabulary, spelling, revising and editing skills are also taught.

Primary Literature Collection K–4

In the **Primary Literature Collection** (grades K–4), the software turns the computer into a wonderfully flexible storyboard for small group or whole class writing activities. Forty of the most popular children's books and poems are bundled with this software and used as the inspiration for student writing patterns. After the teacher reads the story or poem to the students, the students, probably with the teacher, aide or volunteer typing in their answers, "write" their ideas. Included with the book-inspired writing patterns is a model group journal that students and teacher can modify. This approach to writing for young students capitalizes on children's natural excitement toward learning as they write a story or journal together.

For example, after the class reads *The Runaway Bunny*, children dictate or write their ideas about what they'd turn into in order to run away from their mothers. The following pattern appears on the screen and is repeated for each child in the class or group:

"Mommy, I'm going to become a _____,"
said N (child's name goes in N place).

"N (child's name), if you become a _____,
I'll become a _____ and _____,"
said N's mother.

Thus, children see their words and names being written or, if they are ready to write at the keyboard, they simply fill in the blanks. Connecting students' ideas to a repeating pattern gives them the repetition they need for comprehension and success, and within the pattern, each child can express his or her unique ideas.

After each child in the group has responded, a printout is made which students illustrate. The activity culminates with each student sharing his or her individual page, or with teacher and students reading from a book containing everyone's illustrated ideas. What child will ever forget *The Runaway Bunny* after this! While all of these primary level programs are designed for group writing, they also lend themselves to use by individual students working alone or working with another student at the computer.

Elementary Collection K–5

The **Elementary Collection** also contains several poetry activities designed to teach basic writing and reading skills. The chant, with its easy rhythmic pattern and repetitive structure, is the basic building block. So if students are learning similes, they will respond to a pattern on the screen that looks like this:

Fast, fast, fast
I'm as fast as a _____, said N.

Slow, slow, slow
I'm as slow as a _____, said N.

As it happens, this particular poetry activity is also keyed to a wonderful picture book called *Quick as a Cricket* by Audrey Wood.

Or if children are working with the "ay" word family, they see all the simple "ay" words on the screen and are given a sample poem or an opening chant:

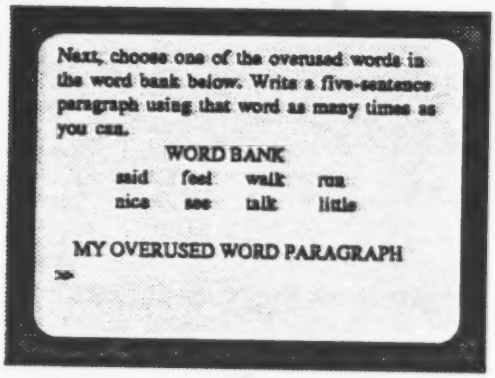
[AY WORDS: bay, day, gay, hay, jay, lay, may, nay, pay, ray, stay, way, away, slay, tray, clay, today]

Complete this chant using as many "ay" words as possible:

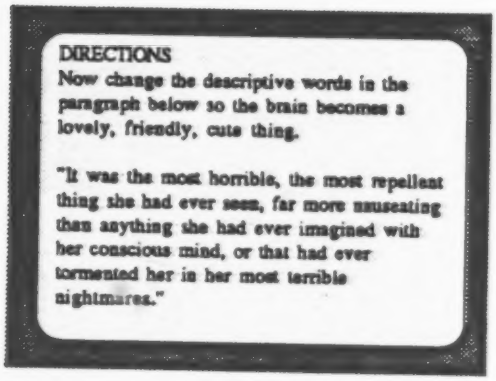
Play, play play
Please _____
Clay, clay, clay
I _____
Today, today, today
_____

Intermediate Collection 5–8
Secondary Collection 9–12

Based on the classroom-tested language experience and writing as a process approaches, **WRITE ON! Intermediate** and **Secondary Collections** can be used to supplement any phase of the writing curriculum. Prewriting activities stimulate the flow of ideas and help students gather and select writing topics. Organizing activities teach students how to improve their writing through correct sentence, paragraph and theme structure. Writing activities enable students to practice composing on the computer while emphasizing types of writing style, point of view, etc. Rewriting/correcting activities teach rewriting and editing skills. Publishing activities result in a printed product that can be shared with others.


Next, choose one of the overused words in the word bank below. Write a five-sentence paragraph using that word as many times as you can.
WORD BANK
said feel walk run
nice see talk little
MY OVERUSED WORD PARAGRAPH

In an activity from Paragraphs 6 *called Spicy Words, students replace overused words with more colorful and descriptive language. Then they write and edit their own overused word paragraph.*


DIRECTIONS
Now change the descriptive words in the paragraph below so the brain becomes a lovely, friendly, cute thing.
"It was the most horrible, the most repellent thing she had ever seen, far more nauseating than anything she had ever imagined with her conscious mind, or that had ever tormented her in her most terrible nightmares."

In this step of an activity called Descriptive Language from the Intermediate Collection WRITING STYLE, students work with the language used by L'Engle as Meg encounters IT in A Wrinkle In Time.

The educational power of this collection is the teaching of basic writing skills at the application level using computer functions, and these skills are internalized through whole writing activities. While the educational utility of these activities is rooted in the advantages that word processor functions provide, these diskettes take into account that students may have limited computer time and that teachers and students may prefer doing some activities with paper and pencil. Included on the teacher side of the disks, along with a teacher activity guide, are activities to be done on hardcopy printouts.

This is the first educational software designed to take full advantage of the ideas embodied in desktop publishing—indeed, this is desktop curriculum! Teachers can adapt these activities to meet the needs of their students or to emphasize particular concerns. This collection should be continually growing and self refining. Humanities Software plans an expansion of five diskettes per month with a five year goal of over 250 diskettes. And they expect the new disks to come from needs and strategies identified in the classroom.

Karen Jostad, former Manager of Courseware Design at MECC is the educator and designer behind the WRITE ON! collection. She states:

"The **WRITE ON!** Diskettes realize their potential each time educators trying to solve particular problems see ways to adapt the strategies in these materials. In the end, we expect this to be a largely teacher authored library. We hope this first collection will help educators see new ways to use word processing."

This approach to computer assisted instruction takes us one step closer to aligning technology with the best current ideas in curriculum design and writing instruction. The **WRITE ON!** collection runs on all major educational word processors that run on the Apple—**Bank Street Writer, AppleWorks, Apple Writer, FrEd-Writer, MECC Writer, The Writing Workshop,** and **Magic Slate.** This collection soon will be available for other computer systems. ■

5 Cooperative Learning

"None of us is as good as all of us."

Cooperative Learning and Staff Development

Mary Male

"Cooperative learning? I tried that. It's just like all those other fads whose time will come and go."

Some years ago, I used to long for the day when every teacher would know what I was talking about when I mentioned cooperative learning. For me, cooperative learning changed my use of learning groups from "trial and error" or "hit and miss" activities to a "science" of structured, systematic processes. After eight years of virtually continuous training (none of it was received during my teacher preparation days), intense study, and ongoing practice, I am beginning to feel as though cooperative learning is a natural part of my teaching repertoire.

My great fear is that cooperative learning will not realize its potential as a catalyst for changing classrooms from wastelands of fragmented bits of information, where students are isolated from each other and seemingly uninterested in learning and teachers have little opportunity to share ideas with colleagues. Staff development, with its voracious appetite for new and appealing workshop titles, has adopted cooperative learning as its latest menu item. Will substantive change occur, or will teachers look back in a few years and say (as they have with so many educational fads), "I tried that . . . ."

This article examines five potential pitfalls of the current rush to provide training in cooperative learning and presents several promising practices which promote a greater likelihood of long-term, high quality use of cooperative learning in classrooms.

Pitfalls

1. Mandating change from the top down, requiring that everyone implement cooperative learning on a set timetable. Teacher requests for training in cooperative learning are increasing, and district staff development personnel are responding to those requests. Research about adult learning tells us that teachers go through "stages of concern" (Hall & Hord, 1987) in trying something new. To get results, training must respond to those stages and present realistic expectations about how cooperative learning will be used in classrooms in the early phases of learning. Training should be viewed as a privilege and an opportunity—not a prison sentence.

2. Providing training by an expert without systematic follow-up and opportunities for peer and expert coaching in classrooms. The following table (Joyce & Showers, 1988) graphically illustrates the reality of most development experiences; they are a waste of everyone's money and time. Without ongoing coaching, feedback, encouragement, and support, we can realistically expect 5 to10% of the participants in cooperative learning workshops to implement any aspect of the training over time.

Effect Sizes for Training Outcomes by Training Components

Training Components and Combinations	Training Outcomes		
	Knowledge	Skill	Transfer of Training
Information	.63	.35	.00
Theory	.15	.50	.00
Demonstration	1.65	.28	.00
Theory Demo.	.66	.86	.00
Theory Practice	1.15		.00
Theory Demo. Prac.		.72	.00
Theory Demo. Practice Feedback	1.31	1.18	.39
Theory Demo. Practice Feedback Coaching	2.71	1.25	1.68

3. Selecting cooperative learning as a school or district goal without making a commitment to its implementation over a 5- to 10-year period of time. Every teacher has had at least 20 years of modeling and training in competitive and individualistic teaching strategies, either as a participant or a trainee. If we want the same degree of expertise to be developed in cooperative learning, a similar expectation of time commitment would not be out of line.

4. Training teachers to use cooperative learning in their classrooms without making other aspects of the school cooperative. That is, teachers remain isolated in their own classrooms, with little opportunity for professional interaction with their peers, with little responsibility or participation in school decision-making, and with no commitment of resources to joint development of curriculum and classroom materials for cooperative learning (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1986).

5. Using cooperative learning as an effective alternative to present curriculum that is "right answer-oriented" and which emphasizes rote learning and presents information without calling for higher level thinking and analysis. Although cooperative learning is certainly an effective tool for student achievement, its real power lies in the truly rich, thoughtful, demanding tasks our students need to tackle. Cooperative learning really shines with tasks that truly require "multiple abilities" (Cohen, 1986) for the group to be successful, which stimulate students to look for many possible solutions and to argue forcefully for their point of view, and which provide recognition for the value of cultural and linguistic differences!

Promising Practices

It would be easy to get discouraged after reading the pitfalls, except for the many success stories of cooperative learning. The schools and school districts mentioned here are but a few of the many where the focus has been on long-term, high quality results, and teacher implementation of cooperative learning reflects that view.

1. Participation in cooperative learning training is voluntary, occurs as a result of teacher-expressed need, and has administrative support. In Humboldt County, CA, for example, teachers who desired training in cooperative learning first had to form a team at their school site and complete an application, and their site administrator had to state why their team should be selected. Site administrators participated in specially planned phases of the training and provided release time, both for training and for peer coaching following the training.

2. Timelines for implementation are set at a minimum of three years. At Santa Clara, CA, Unified School District, cooperative learning has a three-year commitment for staff development. Their effort started on a pilot basis, where teachers who requested training could receive it, along with coaching and follow-up. One school piloted a cooperative learning strategy in reading and writing (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition, or CIRC), developed at The Johns Hopkins University (Stevens, Madden, Slavin, & Farnish, 1987). An evaluation of its effectiveness will determine if further training is done on this cooperative learning strategy at other schools.

3. Curriculum review and curriculum development are integral parts of the staff development program. At Bradley School, Pajaro Unified School District, the staff is using cooperative learning in conjunction with California's new curriculum framework for language, which emphasizes literature and a "process" approach to writing (California Department of Education, 1987). Teachers at Bradley are jointly planning lessons, doing peer coaching, have obtained "expert" coaching from their cooperative learning trainer, and fully expect that their joint implementation of cooperative learning and a new curriculum framework will take a minimum of five years.

In the Santa Clara Unified School District, teachers at Bracher School obtained release time to develop additional lessons needed for their implementation of CIRC. Curriculum materials for this cooperative learning strategy are kept in the staff room, with easy access for all to use. The teachers are active participants in suggesting revisions and expansion of materials.

4. Recognition is provided to local talent as the implementation efforts in cooperative learning expand. Schools and districts that develop their own expertise and build an "in-house" cadre of trainers with extensive classroom expertise and experience in cooperative learning help guarantee the longevity and success of the training. Reliance on outside experts keeps schools and districts dependent, fostering the belief that "we can't do it on our own." San Jose, CA, Unified School District developed training teams for their cooperative learning training, one round of which has been completed at every school; further training is underway. Santa Clara Unified School District has 20 trainers who team up, building a spirit of collegiality and mutual support. The teachers who participated in Humboldt County's training returned to their schools and, after extensive practice in their own classrooms, invited peers in to observe and then did training for interested school staff members.

Getting Started

If you are getting started with cooperative learning in your classroom, here are some tips for maintaining your sanity:

1. Start small and move slowly. Let your successes build the momentum for continuing to try new things.

2. Notice the changes—keep a journal, if possible, so that you won't overlook what a difference you're making with your students.

3. Celebrate with your students the small successes you create.

4. Don't give up when a lesson crashes and burns.

5. Support other teachers by sharing ideas, observing, team teaching, encouraging, and noticing what's working.

6. Search for "rich" tasks for cooperative learning—those with many possible answers and which utilize many different skills, both academic (but not just reading, writing, and math) and collaborative.

7. Let students know what a risk-taker you are when you are trying a new strategy or a new lesson; model risk-taking so that students will have confidence to take risks with you and after leaving your class. ¶

References

California State Department of Education. (1987). *English-language arts framework for California Public Schools kindergarten through grade twelve*. Sacramento: Author.

Cohen, E. (1986). *Designing groupwork: Strategies for the heterogeneous classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Hall, G., & Hord, S. (1987). *Change in schools: Facilitating the process*. Albany: State University of New York.

Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Holubec, E. (1986). *Circles of learning*. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company.

Joyce, B., & Showers, B. (1988). *Student achievement through staff development*. New York: Longman.

Stephens, R., Madden, N., Slavin, R., & Farnish, A. (1987). Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition: Two field experiments. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 22(4), 433-454.

[Mary Male, Division of Special Education, School of Education, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192.]

" . . . cooperative learning empowers students and provides instructional strategies that enable people to become actively involved and socially responsible participants in their own learning."

Cooperative learning probably had its informal beginnings in tribal education, where weaving, cooking, and hunting were all learned by playing and working together. There was no teacher role or classroom in the formal sense. Just sharing.

One can imagine that in the one-room schoolhouse, cooperative learning was essential and natural. Older students taught younger ones.

The naturalness of cooperative learning suggests that it has always gone on; yet only recently has it become an instructional movement. As research showed that an overwhelming amount of student learning time was spent passively absorbing information or filling in blanks, educators began to wonder how to change the situation.

Using ideas from social psychology and small group problem solving, they developed concepts and strategies which could be applied to the classroom. Key among these is the idea of mixed ability groupings, definite rules for constructive interaction or cooperation in achieving set goals, specialized roles, jigsaw lesson designs, and clearly specified criteria for student and teacher evaluation of the learning group's process and products.

Many people predicted that the computer would further isolate students from their teachers and from each other, and that programmed instruction would reduce learning to drill and practice. What is actually happening is that it is around the computer that students are interacting and learning from each other, and new strategies for formal and informal cooperative learning are emerging.

Perhaps more than any other idea in education today, cooperative learning empowers students and provides instructional strategies that enable people to become actively involved and socially responsible participants in their own learning.

Seating for Cooperative Learning

Jon Madian

One of the best ways to do more cooperative learning activities is to seat your students in cells of four, facing each other. This arrangement makes you think about how students might be able to brainstorm, share, and work together. When you have an idea, you don't have to rearrange seating.

When designing the seating groups, be sure to make a heterogeneous grouping of sexes, talents, character traits, and academic skills. Try to make each cell as balanced as possible.

I recently did a workshop on symbolism and simile for a class of sixth graders who were seated this way. After much discussion and writing several group poems, I asked students to each write one line of a poem about their room, little poem they liked the best. This poem was shared orally with the rest of the class.

Now students were confident they could write their own poems. I'm sure this cooperative writing activity provided them with a freer, more imaginative attitude and many more ideas with which to work. It was also great fun! ■

ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS OF COOPERATIVE COMPUTER LESSONS

(The following has been excerpted from Chapter 2 of ***Learning Cooperatively with Computers: An Activity Guide for Teachers*** *by Mary Male, Roger Johnson, David Johnson and Mary Anderson. It has been edited, with permission, for inclusion in TWN. For a complete discussion, we urge readers to see the book. It may be ordered for $12.50 plus $2.50 first class postage from Educational Apple-Cations, 194 Wedgewood Avenue, Los Gatos, CA 90530.*

(Chapter 1 gave readers the chance to review the options available in structuring student interaction with the computer and with each other in competitive, individualistic and cooperative formats. The differences between traditional group placement and the computer and carefully structured cooperative groups were explained.)

The use of specific cooperative learning strategies can help make your cooperative computer groups successful, both in accomplishing the task you set for them with the computer, and also in working effectively as a group. The two strategies discussed in this article (**Learning Together**, developed by Dr. Roger Johnson and Dr. David Johnson, University of Minnesota; and **Jigsaw**, developed by Dr. Eliot Aronson, University of California, Santa Cruz) are by no means the only ones that can be applied to the instructional use of computers; in fact, we encourage you to invent your own, as other teachers have. In selecting or designing a strategy, however, we want you to be successful. The following ingredients have been identified by most teachers considered successful in cooperative learning.

Team Assignment and Preparation

The purpose of team assignment is to ensure a good heterogeneous mix of students, taking into account sex, race, cultural, and language differences, problematic behaviors, and past performance (academic achievement in the subject area to be addressed). In the past, schools have made every effort to group students homogeneously (by chronological age, ability, etc.) with limited success. Cooperative learning offers teachers an opportunity to capitalize on the benefits of heterogeneity and to abandon the near-impossible task of finding homogeneous groups.

Some teachers prefer to assign students randomly to teams, in order to keep team assignment simple and to demonstrate to students that they are expected to work together in groups no matter where they are assigned. Assignment to teams can be as simple as having students count off or dealing a deck of cards.

Other teachers prefer a more structured approach in order to take personality variables into account. Some teachers allow students to request one or two people to work with as team assignments are made, so that students have some choice and so does the teacher.

If students have not worked together before, some structured team-building activities will result in fewer problems later on. Getting-acquainted activities such as having students complete a crossword puzzle designed by the teacher with clues about each person on the team; a team brainstorming of a list of shared interests, characteristics, or possessions; or the selecting of a team name and designing a team poster or team motto all model the teacher's philosophy that how well students work together is as important as how much they learn. Many teachers, particularly in the upper grades, feel that team-building activities are awkward or take up too much time. These same teachers, however, later wish they had taken time in the beginning to establish good starting points for group work, rather than having to back up and solve problems.

Establishing Positive Interdependence

Positive interdependence is the feeling among team members that no one is successful unless everyone is successful.

- **Goal interdependence** – "You're not finished until everyone in the group can explain how to teach the turtle to polygon."

- **Task interdependence** – "Each of you will be an expert on a different aspect of the story—one on the setting, one on the characters, one on the plot. You must agree on how to put your story together."

- **Resource interdependence** – "I will give only one worksheet to the group. You must record your group's predictions of what the turtle will do on the worksheet."

- **Role interdependence** – "Each of you will have a job; one of you will be a Checker, for example, to make sure that everyone can explain how they came up with that answer. I will be giving your group credit for how well each of you does your job."

• **Reward interdependence** – "If everyone on the team scores at least _____, then you can earn bonus points for your own grade."

Because students have had so much practice with competitive and individualistic structures, this positive interdependence must be communicated clearly, concretely, and in advance of the group work. Otherwise, students may use their usual ways of working to get the job done, and this will result in problems for the group. For example, before you start the groups, establish why it is important to work in the groups. What is the payoff? "You will want to work closely with each other, so that your group grade will go up." "You will receive bonus points for your grade for every student who makes 100% in your group." "If your group does all of its work correctly, you can earn up to 15 minutes of free computer time."

Direct Teaching of Social Skills

Teachers who use cooperative learning make no assumptions about the social skills of their students; they teach these skills just as they teach any other area of the curriculum or just as they teach students how to use a computer. The direct teaching of social skills involves selecting the skills to be practiced in a cooperative computer lesson, defining the skills, discussing with students why the target skill is important, providing practice in using the skill by role playing or brainstorming words or phrases that could be used, and monitoring to make sure that students continue to use the skill.

Individual Accountability

Most teachers who have experienced learning in traditional groups, or who have tried using traditional learning groups in their classroom, find that the addition of *individual accountability* ensures that each student contributes to the group and that the teacher can monitor exactly how much each student has contributed or the level of mastery of each student of the target skills. In a cooperative computer activity, for example, each student must be able to explain, produce a printout, or score at a certain level on a quiz on his or her own. Each student must know, *in advance*, that he or she will be responsible individually for demonstrating mastery.

Processing

The teacher's role in observing and assisting not only with the curriculum content questions but also with issues about how well groups are functioning emphasizes the importance the teacher places on group skills. The time for students and the teacher to process what they observed, what they learned, and how they want to improve is essential if the teacher wants students in the classroom to behave as though "We are all in this together, sink or swim." Along with team-building and preparation for teamwork, processing frequently gets shortchanged, which results in taking extra time as groups encounter problems that they are unable to solve themselves. Giving the class an opportunity to generate solutions for problems and to become aware of the behaviors and social skills that make the group work well frees the teacher from dealing with problems group by group.

These essential ingredients will be illustrated specifically within the two strategies we have selected for computers and cooperative learning. As you begin to adapt and invent your own cooperative learning strategy, keep these essential ingredients in mind. They absolutely work, and they will reduce the problems you might have as you get started!

LEARNING TOGETHER

Learning Together is a simple cooperative strategy that offers a blend of different forms of interdependence. The teacher:

1. Assigns students to heterogeneous teams and does team-building as necessary.
2. Presents group goal.
3. Reviews social/group skill roles to be emphasized (Checker, Praiser, etc.)
4. Makes sure at least one student in each group can operate the software program.
5. Explains how each individual's understanding or contribution will be evaluated.
6. Observes the group both at the computer and at a table as they plan their strategies and work, taking notes for awarding special recognition points or for discussion during the processing time.
7. Reviews the group product.
8. Checks for individual participation, understanding, and contribution.
9. Recognizes outstanding group performance.
10. Leads processing discussion.

JIGSAW

Jigsaw uses task interdependence to promote cooperation among team members. A blend of cooperative and individual activities are used to complete the computer tasks. The teacher:

1. Assigns students to heterogeneous teams and ensures adequate team preparation.
2. Presents the group goal.
3. Distributes one expert sheet with the same number of expert topics as team members to each team.
4. Meets with expert groups. The meeting assures that the one person from each team with the same expert topic is prepared to teach his or her teammates that target skill.
5. Monitors the groups as each team member teaches the others on the team the target skill.
6. Calls on individuals from each team to demonstrate the target skill or gives an individual quiz.
7. Determines results, awards special recognition points for improvement, performance, etc.
8. Leads a discussion with the teams about what went well and what problems remain to be solved.

Here is a sample **Jigsaw** cooperative learning activity:

Using NEWSROOM to Publish a Newspaper

Newsroom has all the tools to allow you to create a custom-made newspaper, newsletter, brochure, flyer, etc. You can write articles, set headlines, select graphics and pictures to accompany the stories, lay out the pages, and print the results.

Subject Area: Language Arts

Grade level: Upper elementary, junior high, senior high

Objectives:

A. Students will be able to interview people and collect information for news stories.

B. Students will be able to write and edit news stories.

C. Students will write and design headlines.

D. Students will select graphics and design layout for newspaper.

Materials needed: **Newsroom**, at least four blank disks per team, printer, paper, pencils.

Time required: Ten to twelve 50–60 minute periods.

Procedures:

A. Procedures

1. Assemble needed materials.
2. Practice using **Newsroom**.
3. Review the use of **Newsroom**.

B. Setting the stage

1. "How many of you have ever read a newspaper? Have any of you ever wondered how a newspaper gets published? We will be learning these skills as we publish our own class newspaper."
2. Tell students that they will be working in teams as they collect stories, write articles, design layout, etc. Each team will be responsible for one page of the newspaper and each team member will be responsible for one particular type of job.

C. Input

1. Review with students the components of a good news story (5 W's and the H: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How).
2. Brainstorm with students ideas for stories for the class newspaper, and list the ideas on the blackboard.
3. List the roles of team members: headline writer, reporter, editor, layout designer. Discuss each role and provide a resource sheet of instructions for each role.
4. Assign students to heterogeneous teams.
5. Students choose role assignments and select stories.

6. Set group goal. "A group grade will be given for the completed page for the newspaper. Special recognition points will be given for those who do a particularly outstanding job in their role assignment. When all teams have completed their pages, the newspaper will be printed, with copies for everyone."

7. Demonstrate the use of **Newsroom** in producing a newspaper. Have teams practice using the program with sample articles, headlines, and graphics. Show finished products.

D. Guided Practice

1. Students work first in teams, filling in a timeline and completing plans for their page.

2. Students meet in expert groups (Reporters, Editors, Headline Writers and Layout Designers). The teacher meets briefly with each group to clarify responsibilities and answer questions. For practice, the teacher may distribute some sample articles needing additional facts, editing, headlines, and layout. Reporters add needed information, Editors correct spelling and punctuation, Headline Writers make up headlines, and Layout Designers practice assembling a page.

3. Students return to their teams to share their work from the expert groups.

4. Reporters begin their assignments with the assistance of their teammates.

5. Team members work on individual responsibilities as stories are completed.

6. Expert groups meet to share progress on each team's page. Teacher monitors progress and assists if necessary.

7. When the team completes their page, the Editor checks it one last time. Students individually sign their name, indicating that they have participated in the work and that they have checked their own work to make sure it is correct.

E. Closure

1. Students turn in their page to the teacher for review.

2. Teacher reviews the printed work of the team as well as any problem areas with team members.

3. Team members complete any revisions or corrections and print the final version of their page.

4. Expert groups meet to review all of the pages and to see how well the newspaper fits together. Suggestions for changes are considered by expert groups and finally by each team.

5. The final edition of the newspaper is printed and distributed.

F. Independent Practice

1. Students take a field trip to a local newspaper and interview persons with a role similar to the one they played.

2. Students decide whether or not to publish another edition of the newspaper.

3. New ideas for newsletters and/or news articles are shared.

4. Teacher leads a discussion of how the groups worked, awards special recognition points, and provides other recognition/rewards for teamwork and overall performance. The teacher asks: How well did your group do on the lesson? How did you help someone in your group? Were there any problems in your group? How did someone in your group help you? What would you do differently next time? ■

GROUP ROLE EVALUATION SHEET
Reaction to Group Work

Today, as a group, we:

	YES	NO
1. Accomplished our goal	_____	_____
2. Helped each other add or clear up ideas	_____	_____
3. Felt good about working together	_____	_____

As a group member I acted as:

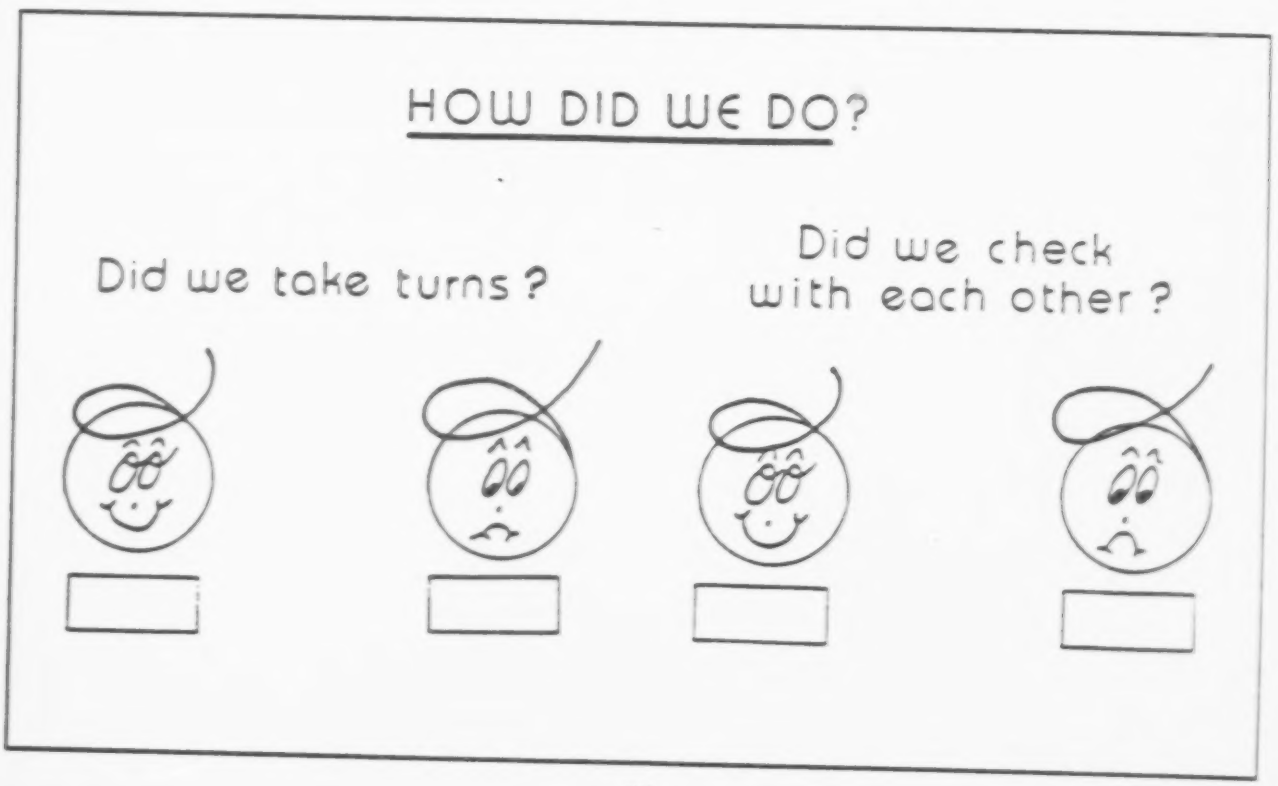
	MOSTLY	A LITTLE	NONE
- Idea generator	_____	_____	_____
- Encourager of others	_____	_____	_____
- Clarifier of ideas	_____	_____	_____
- Summarizer	_____	_____	_____
- Record keeper	_____	_____	_____

- Something that I did to make the group feel better about working together: _____
- Something that I did to make the group more successful in doing its work: _____
- Something that I'll work on next time: _____

Other members who:

- Added ideas _____
- Encouraged others _____
- Summarized or clarified _____
- Kept records _____
- Were very quiet _____

Developed by Judith A. Hay, St. Clair, Michigan. Appears in ***Structuring Cooperative Learning Experiences in the Classroom****, P. Roy (ed.), 1982.*



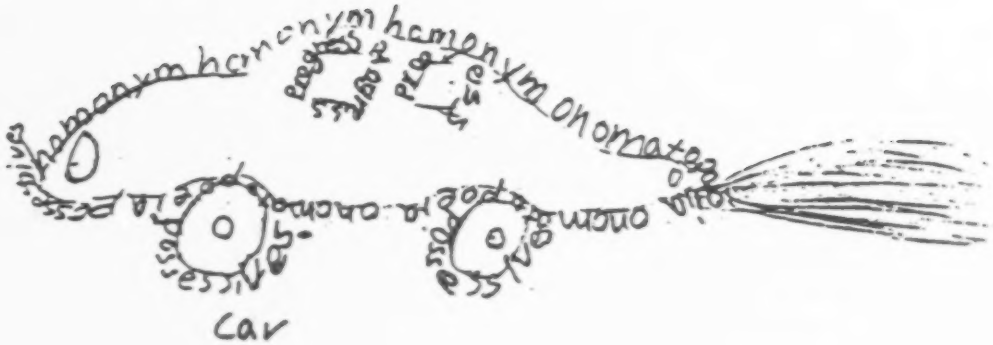
GROUP SKILLS SHEET

1. How carefully did we check?			
2. Did we help each other?			
3. Did we encourage each other?			
4. Did we finish our work?			
5. How well did we teach?			

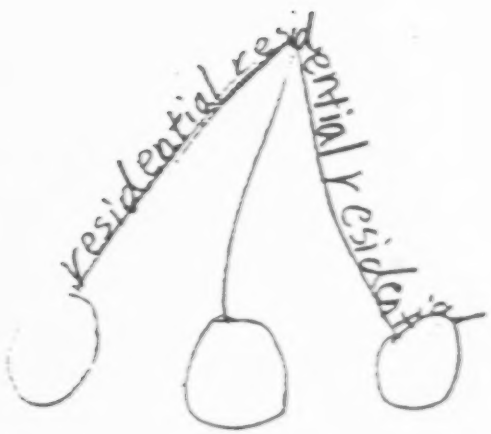
What was your group good at?

Comments ta da

Group Members Sign



Car



Cherry

90

6 Writing as a Process

"There are three tricks to writing well . . . only no one knows what they are."

W. Somerset Maugham

"Uses of the Computer in Teaching the Composing Process"

(Excerpts from a paper delivered by Irene D. Thomas at NCTE 1985)

We have already heard countless anecdotal reports about how reluctant writers have suddenly become eager writers, how children have become willing to talk about their writing and share it as they begin to internalize writing as a process—a living cycle of planning, drafting and revising—a process made substantially easier by a good word processor used under the direction of a creative, well trained teacher. Indeed, word processing (the very name offers a key) supports the process model of writing instruction in ways that no other educational tool can. We believe that in time anecdotal reports will be substantiated by empirical research. But by no means should we wait for empirical research before going ahead. Our observations and intuitions should be trusted as never before.

1. Planning

Basic text editing functions allow users to generate ideas and explore their thinking without limits. Because, as Stephen Marcus says, "words on a screen dance in light rather than lying frozen in semi-permanency, the user is encouraged to experiment, to change his or her mind, to follow an unexpected line of inquiry. All of the prewriting methods fostered by the National Writing Project—clustering, brainstorming, free writing, invisible writing, mapping—are easier to do on the computer screen than on paper. Programs are already being developed to expedite these processes through appropriate screen prompts, prompts which individualize instruction in a way that saves teachers enormous time. Hugh Burns and Helen Schwartz, both of whom have designed computer programs that engage students in shared dialogues as part of the inquiry/invention stage of planning, have shown the potential power of the computer as an aid to fruitful collaboration (see Wresch, *The Computer in Composition Instruction*, NCTE publication). In passing, it should be remembered that research on writing competence has already shown that students who plan are better writers than those who don't.

2. Drafting

Again, the ease with which changes can be made encourages students to view their work as one stage of an ongoing process. They can remain open to sudden insights and major reorganization through "move" functions, and major additions and deletions with none of the obstacles of retyping an entire piece of work. We believe that research will eventually show that the higher thinking skills we seek to engage students in will be more evident among students who have learned to compose with word processing tools and related support programs such as those mentioned above.

3. Revising/Editing/Proofreading

While even the most sophisticated mechanics and style checkers cannot judge content and other high level writing features, the aids they do provide can serve to free the teacher for real teaching—of higher order thinking skills. In the future, teachers freed from teaching and evaluating mechanics, and who are also trained to focus on substantial issues, may truly become our best educational resources.

Editing aids available to older students through programs such as *WANDAH*, and to younger students through *The Writing Workshop*, for example, check the writer's spelling, diction, sentence and paragraph length, and other measurable features of style. Such well designed programs encourage students to review their sentence structure and direct them back to their original plan to see if major ideas were omitted or changed. They may also remind students of the audience and purpose they indicated during the planning stage. The best of these programs allow teachers to alter data bases; furthermore, they do not force judgments on the writer, but merely report features for re-examination. All of the software packages mentioned expedite peer review and sharing in a non-threatening way.

NCTE's active support of these directions will help alleviate concerns about the use of word processing and editing aids:

1. Teacher training and retraining designed with the computer age in mind.
2. Financial support for school computer labs from parents, local business and government grants.
3. Incentives to schools, software producers and universities to conduct individual and collective research projects on the uses of computers in schools.
4. Rewards and recognition to schools that develop and implement excellent models for computer applications.
5. Provisions for a forum through which teachers can write about and disseminate their successes with computer applications.
6. Development of new audiences for student writing through electronic networking and publishing.
7. More opportunities and encouragement for printout publications of student work.
8. Allowing the very best computer applications to lead the way—or at least influence—curricular reform. The realization, for example, that keyboarding will be a fact of modern life should serve as an incentive to readjust the curriculum to allow for keyboarding instruction.

In the opinion of most members of our committee, word processing is the best justification yet for using computers in our classrooms and in our curriculum. ■

92

PREWRITING STRATEGIES

Anne Auten

As I write this column, I am sitting plunk in the middle of the dog days of August; as you read this, however, my Introduction to Quantitative Methods 110 class and I will have embarked on the writing project I am about to describe. But first, a bit of background.

For the past two semesters I have required a full-blown paper—complete with end notes and bibliography—from my undergraduate students, many of whom are budding CPAs and system analysts, with a peppering of computer science, economics and psychology majors. A small component of QM 110 (an introduction to data processing and BASIC programming) is an analysis of the impact of technology on society.

In the spirit of a conference on human values and the computer revolution that I attended in October 1983 at Ohio University/Athens, I have been slowly increasing the size of that component. The keynote speaker at the conference, cosponsored by the university's departments of philosophy and English, was Joseph Weizenbaum, self-professed pacifist and computer scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and author of *Computer Power and Human Reason*. Questions addressed at the conference, which was open to the general public, ranged from "Will computers alter the meaning of being human?" to "How will your community be changed by the Computer Revolution?"

Included among the affective learning outcomes for QM 110 is the piquing of student consciousness on a variety of the issues addressed at that 1983 conference still under discussion today: how to combat cyberphobia or intimidation by machine, definitions of computer literacy, robotics and job displacement, impact of the electronic cottage, computer crime, copyright and software piracy, an individual's right to privacy, and computers and the handicapped, among others.

"While their literature reviews were thorough enough, their work lacked the kind of thoughtful reaction to the issues that demonstrated they had really chewed them over. So . . . this semester I will try a heavy dose of prewriting to give them time to chew."

To achieve that outcome, I have required that students complete a literature search of their choice of one of the above topics, word process a review of that literature and their reaction to it, and present a 10-minute summary of their findings to the class, complete with a follow-up question and answer period. Their papers were submitted as double-spaced, wide margined first drafts; I spent what seemed like weeks writing lengthy responses to these drafts (I had two sections of 35–40 students each), returned them for students to revise, and then graded their final drafts.

I experimented each semester with different ways of responding to their first drafts, from correcting anything that even remotely resembled an error to offering broad, general suggestions on organization or style. No specific feedback strategy seemed to guarantee successful student papers. While their literature reviews were thorough enough (thanks to the college's low-cost online data base search service and complete collection of ERIC indexes), their work lacked the kind of thoughtful reaction to the issues that demonstrated they had really chewed them over. So . . . this semester I will try a heavy dose of prewriting to give them time to chew.

As we begin the semester, the students will decide on an issue of their choice, either from my list of suggestions or from their own interests, but related to the general topic of the impact of technology on society. They will then write initial reactions to their issues in notebooks purchased expressly for that purpose, and I will respond in the same notebooks. We will dialogue on their issues regularly in their notebook "journals" for six weeks or so, after which they will begin their literature reviews. They will collect their research notes in the same notebooks, turning them in regularly for my reactions for another six weeks. I'll then give them the same criteria for their written reports that I have used previously, and invite those who feel comfortable with public speaking to present brief, oral report summaries.

Based on the large body of research that has reported the benefits of journal writing, conferencing and extensive prewriting exercises, this strategy should indeed produce thought-filled and thoughtful student papers. ■

Researcher, Writer, Editor, Publisher

Role Playing the Writing Process

Karen Jostad

"Rewrite/edit! But I'm finished! I've written my composition. It's turned in. And now you want me to write it over?"

This complaint, which comes in several variations, is often heard by process writing teachers. How do you overcome the feeling on the part of many students that they are doing work *over* rather than improving it?

Assigning roles and separate products for each role is one way. As RESEARCHER the student produces a prewrite document in whatever form you assign—brainstorm chart, diagrams, successive lists, stream of consciousness, note cards, etc. The WRITER produces a drafted composition based on the RESEARCHER'S document. The EDITOR, working at two levels, rewrites the WRITER'S draft and edits for mechanical errors. The PUBLISHER formats and produces the composition in a form for sharing with others—anthology, bulletin board, newsletter, sidewalk painting, etc.

By assuming a unique role for each phase of the process, students become more aware of the differences between the phases, and are less likely to feel they are doing the same thing over. They aren't done until they've been PUBLISHER and have produced the final product.

Role playing the stages of the writing process also gives you an excellent structure for cooperative groupings. A group of four or five students, including individuals having strengths in skills needed for each phase, can produce one group composition, or each person can write a composition and benefit from the individual strengths within the group. Include in your group at least one idea person, one good editor, and, if possible, one person with a good visual/artistic eye to help with page layout at the publishing phase.

Grading can be a problem when students are producing four products for each final composition. Some teachers are using a simple check sheet showing that each phase has been completed. The final grade is made on the PUBLISHER document only.

Following are some favorite writing activities from the WRITE ON! library, which begin with motivating prewrite structures. These activities result in rich and varied prewrite material. The dynamic medium of the word processor screen allows students to brainstorm freely and then categorize, sort, add to, delete, and otherwise work with the results of their brainstorming. Combine these activities with a good peer editing form at the EDIT/REWRITE phase and some neat layout software (e.g., *Newsroom*) at the PUBLISHING phase and you will have some exciting results.

Using one of the new liquid crystal displays can get an entire class involved in prewrite/brainstorm activities. These displays work with the overhead projector to show program screens to the entire class.

ALPHABET PARAGRAPH

In this activity children think of a word, phrase, or sentence that begins with each letter of the alphabet and which describes the subject. Then they select several of the ideas from their prewrite, and form a 3– to 5–sentence paragraph. This example uses SCHOOL as the topic. Other topics in the activity are friends, money, favorite entertainers, butterflies, etc.

TOPIC: SCHOOL

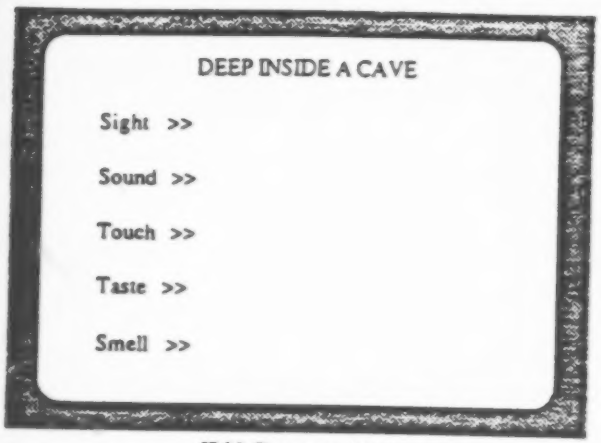
Agreeable
B was my grade in history
Causes me to think
Dips into my free time
Every day from Monday through Friday
Famous for the Trojan basketball team
Grabs me
Hate to leave at 3:30
Intelligent people
Jokes at lunch time
K

1201 Language Delights

SENSE IT

Students imagine what they would see, hear, feel, taste, and smell when given various topics. The following example is "Deep Inside a Cave." Other topics are the school cafeteria at noon, first day of school, the dentist's office, etc.

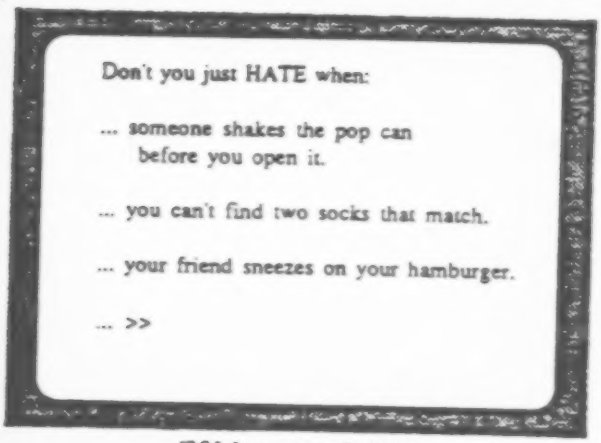
The activity is completed by selecting one of their favorites and writing a 3–to 5–sentence paragraph. Rewrite/edit using a peer edit form on components of a good paragraph, and publish a booklet of SENSATIONS FROM PLACES WE'VE KNOWN.



I211 Paragraphs 4

HATE/LOVE

Students brainstorm a list of things they Hate, and then a list of things they Love. Now they choose their favorite hate or love statement and complete a 3–to 5–sentence paragraph on that subject. Here's a peer editing sheet to ensure their writings have all the components of a good paragraph. Then publish a booklet on HATE/LOVE, maybe with the Yin/Yang symbol as a cover illustration.

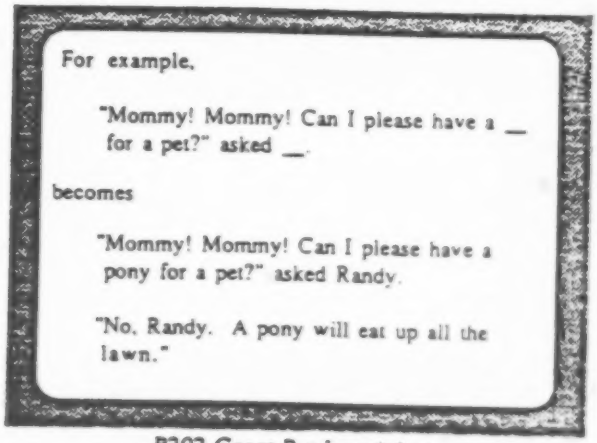

Don't you just HATE when:
... someone shakes the pop can before you open it.
... you can't find two socks that match.
... your friend sneezes on your hamburger.
... >>

I201 Language Delight

PET WISHES

Here's an unusual prewrite activity. After reading *Can I Keep Him?* by Steven Kellogg, children act out the story. Have one student at a time play Arnold and come running up the stairs (tromp, tromp, tromp) and through the door calling, "Mommy! Mommy! Can I please have a _____ for a pet?" The student playing the mother then says, "No, _____. A _____ will _____. Now go back outside. I have a lot of work to do."

As in the story, not all of the children's ideas need to be realistic—in fact, the crazier and sillier, the better.

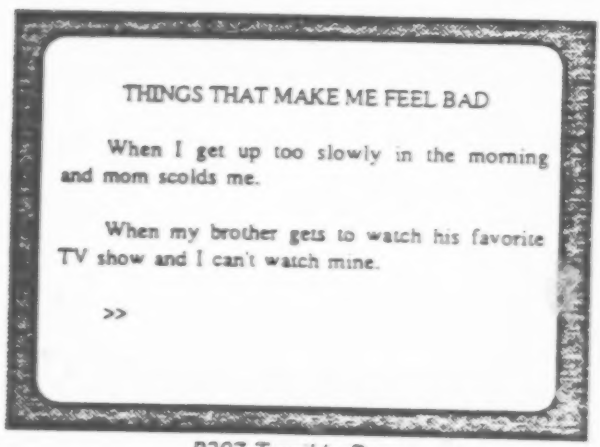

For example,
"Mommy! Mommy! Can I please have a __ for a pet?" asked __.
becomes
"Mommy! Mommy! Can I please have a pony for a pet?" asked Randy.
"No, Randy. A pony will eat up all the lawn."

P202 Great Pet Imaginings

At the publishing phase, this activity makes a great "carry home" story. Parents love to see their children's pet wishes, and are especially delighted with the way in which their child depicts the parent's response.

CHANGING IT

After reading *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, have students brainstorm some things that make them feel bad.


THINGS THAT MAKE ME FEEL BAD
When I get up too slowly in the morning and mom scolds me.
When my brother gets to watch his favorite TV show and I can't watch mine.
>>

P207 Terrible Days

Then encourage them to come up with concrete ways to improve the situation, such as "I could hug my little

95

brother instead of teasing him," or "I could eat my breakfast faster so I wouldn't be late for school." List students' ideas on the chalkboard or in the computer, and then have them complete the pattern below.

"If I'm having a bad day because _____ , I can make it better by _____ ," said _____ .

Come back to the children's statements, and encourage them to add any further ideas they have. Parents are fascinated with the maturity of thought their children show when they see the results of this activity, so...publish, publish, publish.

CRICKET ACTIVITY

Brainstorm a list of similes with the class. *Quick as a Cricket* by Audrey Wood makes a great lead-in for this activity. Try to encourage children to come up with similes of their own that describe something unique about themselves.

SIMILES DESCRIBING OURSELVES

I am as _____ as _____.

I am as SLOW as a TURTLE.

I am as PRETTY as A LITTLE HAMSTER.

I am as WARM as THE EARTH.

P204 I'm As Fast As Fire

The next day, during the write/edit, the student can be encouraged to tell when he felt as "warm as earth," adding to and rewriting the original response. "I am as warm as the earth on a hot sunny afternoon in my grandpa's garden."

During the rewrite/edit phase, it is important for young writers to focus on *enriching* their stories, rather than focusing only on mechanical errors.

A collection of similes can read as a long poem and, as a form of publication, makes a nice addition to the bulletin board.

GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS

Here's a quick one, and a favorite. Using the good news/bad news format, students think of bad news lines in response to a number of good news lines. Get their initial bad news responses in a quick and snappy manner. Then, during the rewrite/edit phase shown below, have them go back and elaborate on the bad news line. Let students get as carried away as they want to be. The contrast between the simple good news line and the elaborate, exaggerated, and colorful bad news line is key to the humor in this activity.

Rewrite/edit

GOOD NEWS: I bit into a nice, fresh, juicy apple.
BAD NEWS: It had a worm in it.

GOOD NEWS: I bit into a nice, fresh, juicy apple.
BAD NEWS: The apple had a gross, green, half of a still wiggling, crawling worm in it.

1220 Sentences 5

A fun publication can result from this activity. A good format for the layout is to reveal the bad news when the page is turned. Illustrations are nice with this one, too.

The Humanities Software Catalog contains many additional titles filled with writing activities that can be carried through the entire writing process, resulting in exciting publications.

Karen Jostad, President
Humanities Software
P.O. Box 950
Hood River, Oregon 97031

THE COMPUTER, COOPERATIVE LEARNING, & THE CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT

Alma Casey Allen

The most educationally rewarding experience I had this year was seeing my fifth grade students cheerfully and easily go through ALL the steps of the writing process using the word processor and cooperative learning. Students improved the quality of their writing by going through the sharing, revising, and editing steps again and again. The quantity of their writing also increased, because they were working together and feeling successful.

Here are the six steps in the writing process and how we used them:

1. PREWRITING

Getting ideas together, usually through brainstorming and sometimes by using other materials and techniques such as role playing to set the stage for ideas.

2. WRITING

Getting ideas down in a given form on paper or using the word processor. For some given forms we set up a specific rubric for writing. For more creative writing we set up a more general rubric.

3. SHARING

Reading each other's writing in order to get feedback, both from peers and from the teacher. We sometimes use a read-around technique, but usually our sharing is made personal through direct oral communication. This sharing provides lots of motivation for rewriting and revising.

4. REVISING

Using feedback to improve the writing. Students sometimes glean additional ideas or more interesting words from other sources such as the teacher, peers, or books.

5. EDITING

Students read their own work in order to identify and correct errors. Sometimes a peer or teacher checks the editing if desired.

6. EVALUATING

During this step, students receive final feedback from the teacher or peers, using a rubric or read-around for peer evaluation.

Writing and Word Processing

"My hand hurts...."
"Do we have to?"
"Oh no! Not that again!"

In my class, writing always came to a groaning halt when students were asked to recopy their work during the revising/editing step—or if they were asked to write more than once a day. The drudgery of editing and revising was killing my students' desire to improve their writing.

My students and I solved part of the problem by using the word processing part of **AppleWorks** to begin to write. Here are some of the good reasons my students and I found for using word processing when writing:

- The computer was a motivational tool. It wasn't just another writing assignment—it was another chance to use the computer.

- Revising was easier, and the more students revised, the better their writing became. Students found using the editing features of the word processor fun, rather than punishment.

- Using the computer gave students experience in working together, which helped their social relationships. Since students learned the word processing program as they went along, they enjoyed sharing the editing commands as they "discovered" them.

- Students' writing was easier to read when they were sharing or evaluating. Reading each other's handwriting was no longer a problem; they could focus more on the writing ideas they were evaluating. (A side benefit was that students were reading and comprehending more.)

- Their hands didn't get tired when writing and rewriting.

- Using the printer made it easy to make multiple copies of their writing for peer sharing, revision, and evaluation.

Cooperative Writing Groups

Working cooperatively at the computer improved students' attitudes toward more than one daily writing assignment. These students had worked cooperatively in previous years, and this year students were working cooperatively in most other subject areas.

The groups were formed using the following process:

1. Heterogeneous groups were formed by the teacher.

2. Students were evaluated individually and as a group according to how well they:

   - Cooperated by staying on task.
   - Made input (everyone has valuable ideas if encouraged).
   - Encouraged others in the group.
   - Compromised and/or voted, and went along with the majority decision when disagreements occurred.
   - Tried to participate, even when they didn't feel they had anything to contribute (all students must contribute at least one thing to the cooperative writing assignment).
   - Asked for help from their group when needed (for instance, understanding paragraph form, transition words, proper punctuation, etc.).
   - Checked each other for understanding of each part of the assignment; taught each other when necessary.

   Each group was responsible for identifying leaders, encouragers, keyboarders, etc., if they wished to operate in that manner as a group.

3. Students were evaluated as a group on their group writing project.

4. Students were evaluated individually on a similar assignment, with the individual receiving two grades: one for his or her own work and one for the group's individual average (if a group has one person who can't write the assignment after participating in their group, the group is graded down for not checking and helping that person more).

Here are the advantages my students and I found to working cooperatively:

- Students said it made them feel more secure when writing an assignment, and that writing with a group made them feel their writing was more interesting than writing on their own.

- It made the thinking/writing process easier. Students said it was easier to think together. They discussed their ideas and rationales with others in their group, so they felt more secure when expressing those ideas or opinions in their writing. (In my class any idea or opinion is accepted as long as it can be justified.)

98

• One-third of the class were designated Chapter I, and consequently students were all learning writing at a different rate. When students began working cooperatively, every student's writing improved and especially the Chapter I students'. The end writing product from students writing together seemed to be a much better writing model for the later individual assignment than if I modeled the writing for the class.

• When students wrote in groups and then as individuals, they were much more successful with their individual products. And the individual success they found in their writing changed their attitude about writing. Very little groaning about writing is ever heard in this class.

• Cooperative grouping makes students more responsible for their own learning, and this ownership often makes for better retention.

• Cooperative learning is "teacher friendly." No more constant remediation conferencing with individual students.

• Students gained social skills and more understanding of each other, especially when sharing their individual writing ideas with their group. They began to trust each other more as they shared writing at very personal levels. This made them a nicer class.

• Students' ability to evaluate (the highest level of thinking) was strengthened as they were forced to evaluate their ability to cooperate, as well as their own writing and that of others in their group.

• Cooperative writing made students feel better about themselves. They said that others had to look at them when talking, and this made them feel important. They said others encouraged them, helped them, and shared with them. One student made the comment that it was "finally okay to be himself." Two other students said they learned more self-control while working in groups.

• Students said they learned more when they worked in groups than on their own, because they were more on task—the group cooperation demanded it. They said they felt more responsible for themselves in the group.

Cooperative Group and Individual Writing Ideas for Writing Across the Curriculum

A DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH ON AN OREO COOKIE
- followed by individual paragraphs describing a chocolate chip cookie

WRITE-A-ROUND STORIES
- followed by individual groups each doing a write-a-round story—looking for characters

A DIFFERENT ENDING TO A LITERATURE STORY
- followed by individual students writing a different ending to another story from their literature book

A REPORT ON THE SOUTHERN COLONIES (this is like snail writing, with the prewriting coming directly from another subject area)
- followed by each student writing a report on the New England or the Middle Colonies

JUSTIFYING THEIR POSITION ON SLAVERY
- followed by individuals writing and justifying their opinion on taxation in the colonies

UNDERSTANDING/KNOWING ORDERED PAIRS (taken from a lesson done in math earlier in the day)
- followed by individuals writing about their understanding of the different angles in geometry

A COMPARISON OF A SOWBUG AND A PILLBUG
- followed by each student writing a comparison of a gecko and an anole (both taken directly from just completed science observations)

A DESCRIPTION OF A FAVORITE CHARACTER IN TODAY'S STORY AND WHY IT IS THE GROUP'S FAVORITE
- followed on another day by individual students describing their favorite character in another story

(Alma Casey Allen, Staff Development Technology Curriculum Specialist, ABC Unified School District, 16700 Norwalk Blvd., Cerritos, CA 90701.)

Peter Adams

REVISING: An Approach for All Seasons

In the September/October issue, I took a fairly dour tone as I reviewed a variety of computer programs that assist students with grammar and punctuation; neither drill and practice nor style checkers inspired much excitement. This time, however, I exude true enthusiasm as I discuss the use of word processing to teach revision and, in particular, editing!

From the work of Sondra Pearl and others, we now know that strong writers spend a greater percentage of their time revising than do weaker writers. This is particularly ironic because the drafts of weaker writers almost always need more revising than those of strong writers.

Since one view of our task as writing teachers is to help our students become stronger writers, we must convince our students to spend more time revising. But spending more time in itself will not produce better writing if the student is an ineffective revisor. So the task of a writing teacher is two-fold: to encourage students to spend more time revising and to ensure that the time they do spend is spent effectively. Of course, an emphasis on revision in the writing classroom is greatly enhanced when students are using word processors.

There are five revision principles that most students need to learn:

1. While all writers do some revising as they create a first draft of a paper, most writers produce better drafts full of better ideas if they postpone as much revision as possible until after they have completed their first draft.

2. Revision is more than just correcting errors in punctuation and grammar—it includes reviewing the overall structure of the paper for unity, organization, development of ideas, and coherence.

3. Sentence-level revision (editing or proofreading) should be postponed if possible until after the major changes have been made.

4. Editing should be a sequence of rereadings in which the reader looks for only one category of problem at a time.

5. The editing process should be experimental, even playful; it should be a search for the most effective way of saying things, rather than merely a search for error.

As teachers, we need to search for ways to encourage more and more effective revision by our students. One way to accomplish this is to require that papers be revised, and revised several times.

Most of us have required revision only when a student has turned in a particularly weak piece of writing. This encourages students to think of revision as punishment, as something that good writers don't have to do—certainly not the message we intend.

If we require all students to revise papers regularly, we encourage the opposite attitude; we encourage students to view revision as a normal part of everyone's writing process. Furthermore, if we require students to revise in a series of steps instead of looking at everything at once, we will help them become more effective revisors.

The editing process should be experimental, even playful; it should be a search for the most effective way of saying things, rather than merely a search for error.

One way of accomplishing this is to give students comments on only one feature of their writing at a time. I use the following sequence with my students:

1. Thesis/unity/organization
2. Development of ideas
3. Coherence
4. Expression
5. Grammar/punctuation/spelling

I make comments on only one level of revision each time I see a paper. This means that the first time I see a paper I look first for problems with thesis, unity, or organization. If I find problems in this area, I write a comment about the problem and return the paper for revision. The next time I see the paper, I check for errors with thesis, unity, or organization. If there are none, I then check for development of ideas. If I find problems, I write a comment and return the paper for another revision. If there are no problems there, I move on to the next level. I don't comment on grammar, punctuation, or spelling until all other problems have been cleared up.

One result of this technique of multiple revisions is that students view my comments on their writing in a new light. In the past I've often worried that students were not reading my comments—that they just glanced at the grade and then threw the paper in the trash. Then I read Mary Hayes and Donald Daiker's article on using protocol analysis to study student reactions to teacher comments (*Freshman English News*, Fall 1984) and began to hope that my students *wouldn't* read my comments! Hayes and Daiker catalog a series of student misinterpretations of teacher comments. For example, one student read the comment "Fragment, but it works stylistically, quite well in fact" and interpreted it as "A fragment. Uh, I think it means something that—it's just—it isn't really related to the preceding sentences. It's just—it's out of place." This, even after the class had worked on fragments. Another student, reading a teacher comment that he needed more analysis of the text itself, concluded that he was rambling too much and should merely summarize the text. In both cases, the teacher's comments were doing more harm than good.

However, because I now require multiple revisions of papers, both my attitude and my students' attitudes toward comments have changed dramatically. They read them carefully as suggestions for revision (rather than as the final judgments they seemed to be in the past). And, I now make my comments in a different way. I couch everything as a suggestion for revision rather than as a criticism of a mistake—and not because of some dishonest pose that I assume; my comments really *are* suggestions for revisions.

Multiple revisions do take more time—for teachers and students. But this is no reason not to adopt the technique.

Furthermore, I now know whether I am communicating my thoughts clearly or not. When I read the next revision, it is quite obvious whether or not the student understood my comments.

A student in my class may revise a particular paper four, five, six, or even more times. And I check each paper a corresponding number of times. Unrealistic? Too much work for student and teacher? Not necessarily. Notice, for example, that each time I check a paper, I am making comments on only one level. Once I discover a problem with organization, I write my comment and return the paper; I don't check anything else. The result is that I see each paper many times, but only briefly each time.

What about the amount of work required of the student? Remember that my students are writing on word processors. When they revise a paper, they make changes and reprint; they do not retype the entire paper. If your students do not have access to a word processor, you can still use this technique, but perhaps with only two or three papers in the course of a semester.

Having said all this, I must admit that multiple revisions do take more time—for teachers and students. But this is no reason not to adopt the technique. It may just mean that students write fewer papers. However, fewer papers is not the same thing as less writing. They may, in fact, do more writing, but much of it will be revising rather than writing new drafts. Before adopting multiple drafts, my students wrote eight papers per semester; now they write and revise six.

I said earlier that I don't comment on grammar, punctuation, or spelling until everything else is in fairly good shape. That's so, and the way I comment on grammar is quite different from what I used to do as well.

When everything else is shaped up, I go through the paper and mark the number of errors in each *paragraph*. I may also indicate that the errors are punctuation or agreement problems or something else. I then return the paper to the student for revision. If the student does not correct all the errors, I next indicate which *sentences* have errors and give a more explicit description of the error. On the next draft I will indicate the *exact location* of the remaining errors and ask the student to correct them. When there are errors that the student simply cannot correct or errors that crop up time and time again in a particular student's writing, I make a very specific referral to the Writing Center, where the student works on that particular skill.

The result is that the student gets practice in error correction that (a) makes use of actual writing rather than numbered sentences, (b) is tailored to his or her individual weaknesses because it includes only errors the student has actually made, and (c) trains the student to become more proficient at both locating and correcting errors. Furthermore, this procedure "puts grammar in its place"—at the end of the revising process.

Requiring multiple drafts is a general approach that shows great promise for improving students' revision skills as well as their ability to produce writing with a reduced number of errors. ■

[Peter Adams, English Department, Essex Community College, Baltimore, MD 21237]

Conferencing Strategies

[Taken from "Conferencing Strategies," Rozanne Child Writing Project, UCLA, 1987.]

I. Why Conference?

A. When the child or young adult talks, we learn.
B. When the child or young adult talks, he or she learns.
C. When the child or young adult talks, the teacher has an opportunity to help.
D. Conferencing is where the teacher begins to develop trust.
E. Conferencing helps the student become aware of how he or she functions as a writer.

II. Principles to Help Children and Young Adults Speak

A. Follow the process of the child or young adult.
B. Ask questions the student can answer.
C. Put aside initially a concern for mechanics.

III. Conferencing Strategies

A. Conference Setting
   1. Have a predictable place for the conference.
   2. Sit next to the student, not across from him or her.

B. Conference Timing
   1. Conference at the end of the first draft.
   2. Conference as the need arises.
   3. Conference before publishing.

C. Conference Structure
   1. Student does most of the talking.
   2. Teacher has small repertoire of predictable questions.
   3. Focus of the conference changes, depending upon where the student is in the first draft.

IV. Questions That Teach

A. Opening Questions (Helps students discover what they have to say)
   1. How is your writing coming along?
   2. How may I help you?
   3. Where are you in your draft?

B. Process Questions (Helps students become aware of their thinking processes as they write)
   1. How did you go about writing this?
   2. What problems did you run into while writing this piece?
   3. How did you go about solving these problems?
   4. What will you do next?

C. Evaluation Questions (Helps students become critical readers of their own writing)
   1. What are you trying to say? Is it clear to the reader?
   2. What parts do you like the best? Why?
   3. Is there a part you don't like? Why?
   4. How can you change it to make it more effective?

V. Final Thoughts

A. Ask and wait.
B. Listen well, respond well, and react humanly.

102

Responding to Student Writing

Jon Madian

One difficult challenge in teaching writing through a process approach is knowing when and how to respond to student writing. Here are a few tips:

At the fluency stage, respond by praising what you like. Let the student glory in his or her unique, invented spellings, run-on and incomplete sentence structures, and random organization. You will find that students can often decipher their own writing when it seems impossibly garbled. At such moments you can truly appreciate the inventive intelligence of the beginning writer.

When and how do you make corrections? Try making corrections only when you don't understand what the student is trying to say and you want to be able to read it yourself. You may wonder when the fluency stage ends, so you can get down to some serious teaching. For many teachers, that time is when the student begins to make redundant, boring mistakes. Often around the third grade, students use "and" or "then" to connect sentences and misuse "there" in place of "their." You sense that this is not a child discovering and inventing written expression—this is a student who has been making the same mistake for "two" long. Enter the revision stage.

You may wonder when the fluency stage ends, so you can get down to some serious teaching. For many teachers, that time is when the student begins to make redundant, boring mistakes...this is not a child discovering and inventing written expression—this is a student who has been making the same mistake for "two" long. Enter the revision stage.

When teaching students to revise and edit their work, you want them first to read their work to you or to another student. You want them to think about their work and to consider if their words are expressing the ideas and images they have in mind. Finally, you want to sit with them at a word processor and try out various ideas.

Teaching revision skills requires "thinking out loud" and trying out different approaches. A word processor is uniquely helpful for supporting instruction in revision, because it allows writers to see their ideas and to experiment with different ways of expressing them.

Ideally, every student should be coached on his or her piece of writing; a 5- to 15-minute editing conference twice weekly would be ideal, although a lack of time often makes individual attention difficult.

Many teachers have had success in asking students to write and revise at a computer, working in small groups. The process of group composing and revision requires students to think through, compare, choose, and change what they write. Thus, students learn composing and revision skills by thinking out loud with their peers. Then, when students work on their own, they can apply strategies that they observed being used in their groups.

Some teachers teach revision by working in small or large groups, revising a student prototype or a sample of student writing rewritten to emphasize the kinds of organization and descriptive problems that appear in almost everyone's writing. Once students have worked over a generic piece as a class, they will be more likely to apply the strategies they've learned to their own work.

Teaching writing skills requires real "coaching." Students need individual attention from someone who understands how they can write better. In editing conferences and other editing lessons, you want to emphasize to students that "the issue is not that one way to write is right and that any other way is wrong. Rather, learning to write is a process of exploring and refining, and since it is an exploration, it is best if we (students and teachers) have an open, nonjudgmental, exploring attitude. The goal in practicing writing is to learn what we think and figure out how best to say it—to make our thoughts ring clearly and to find our voice, so others can really hear our intended meaning."

A Staff Development Idea

In order to help teachers understand the strategy of group writing and group revising at a word processor, have teachers work in groups of four to six and write a poem, letter, story, or editorial together. Have them share their

work with another group and receive feedback about what is clear and what needs more work. Then send them back to the computer to revise their writing. They'll be delighted with the experience and will feel much more confident about how such a process helps student writers.

How the teacher directs the individual writing conferences is a model for how students will handle peer editing sessions. ■

A Template to Help Focus Writing Conferences and Peer Editing Sessions

In a word or phrase, describe your impression after the first reading:

- What did you like about this piece?
- What was the writing about?
- Was the intent of the writing clear?
- How did you feel about the writing?
- What details were useful?
- Was the progression of events or thoughts clear?
- If not, can you indicate the nature of the confusion?
- Were any words overused?
- Were there any problems created by punctuation, spelling, or penmanship?
- Additional comments?

Below is a reproducible peer editing sheet developed by Jon Madian and the teachers at Juarez Elementary School in ABC School District. You are encouraged to use it and to change it to meet your needs.

Peer Editing Sheet

Write the name of the story you are evaluating:_____

Name of author(s) _____

Your name(s) _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS: Rate the story on the following points. Ten (10) means the story has a lot of quality. One (1) means it has very little.

1. How well does the opening sentence or paragraph set the mood?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. How well does the language suit the story?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Are there original ideas, images and twists?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Does the conversation help tell the story?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Are the characters clearly described?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Does any part of the story bog down or become too wordy?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Are the characters, problems and motives clear?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

105

8. Does the setting contribute to the story?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Is the setting vividly described?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Is the plot well developed?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. Is the ending satisfying?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please write specific ideas you have about:

1. What works well in this story:

2. What needs improvement:

3. Specific ways in which the story might be improved:

Process Writing Research Topics

Anne Auten

Current research in composition reveals that teaching writing as a process rather than a product develops students' writing skills more effectively. The majority of this research, beginning with a benchmark study on the composing processes of twelfth graders (Emig, 1971), has been supported by colleges and universities. We who are intrigued by the use of word processing in the writing classroom have much to gain from the body of knowledge, developed through the past 15 years on college campuses around the country, that documents the benefits of the process approach.

Process-oriented writing programs share a number of basic features (King & Flitterman-King, 1986). Some combination of the following techniques and program benefits can be found in every classroom where the process model has been adopted:

1. **Increased student interest.** Students working with process approaches often seem more active and attentive than those in traditional English/language arts classes. The same holds true when these writing techniques are used in social studies, math, or science. Students are active writers, responders, and collaborators, rather than passive recipients of textbook-based information.

2. **Development of each writer's voice.** First experiences with the process approach can help students overcome the anxiety often associated with writing. After one or two class periods of listening to each other, they also begin to abandon their reticence about reading their work aloud. Within such a framework of acceptance, students can begin to find individual writing voices, and assuming honest effort, the particular styles they develop tend to be lively and energetic.

> *"NCTE commissions cite an old-fashioned view of language teaching, still held by large and influential segments of the American public, as presenting the greatest obstacle to the process writing approach. This limited view of language tends to retard classroom application of new knowledge from research, and weakens teacher education and staff development efforts."*

3. **Writing, thinking, and learning across the curriculum.** Development of supportive interrelationships among reading, writing, thinking, and talking is the major benefit of using the process approach in any subject area. Students in math, science, and other disciplines keep written records of their thinking as they work to understand a particular situation, concept, or theorem. These problem-solving notebooks, or "learning logs," help students deal with difficult material. The logs occasion not only deep and careful thought about content, but also a clearer perception of what is known and what remains to be learned.

It has been suggested in many publications, including this one, that the computer and text processing/analysis programs can provide powerful support for the process approach to writing instruction. Primarily through the energies of graduate students producing doctoral dissertations and that of computer literate college composition teachers, the beginnings of a body of research literature on computing and composing has developed. Gail Hawisher (1986), in her meta-analysis of 24 writing and word processing studies completed since 1981, reports that despite the dissimilarities of subjects, research methodologies, and analysis tools, a tentative conclusion has emerged from this body of literature. Her conclusion is that "most writers—regardless of age or status—enjoy writing with computers and perceive word processing as a boon to their composing strategies." Not an earth-shaking statement, perhaps, but a beginning.

She goes on to suggest issues for future study, some of which might be taken up by The Johns Hopkins University over the next three years. The university's Center for Social Organization of Schools provided this country's first comprehensive look at instructional uses of computers in schools. Under the direction of Henry Jay Becker, the center completed two national surveys in 1983 and 1985 that sampled over 2,300 elementary and secondary schools in each of those

years. Recently the university's Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools announced a new cooperative research project: The National Field Studies of Instructional Uses of School Computers. During 1988-89, the project will examine computer use for improving student writing and has invited the collaboration of university researchers for the first time, along with district administrators and classroom teachers.

Although research at colleges and universities contributes clear data on effective ways to teach writing, the number of teachers who use a process approach falls short of the majority. Some sources estimate that fewer than 20% of practicing English teachers have received training in process approaches to teaching writing, even though such training opportunities are available through regional National Writing Project summer workshops and a proliferation of college and university programs such as those offered by Bard College's Institute for Writing and Thinking in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.

Why then are so many teachers not practicing process approaches? Perhaps the greatest obstacle is the old-fashioned concept of English and the language arts held by large and influential segments of the American public. This is the consensus of the *1986 Report on Trends and Issues* from the six commissions of the National Council of Teachers of English. The commissions, made up of teachers and professors of English at all levels of education, monitor developments in the English curriculum and in the teaching of reading, literature, composition, the English language, and media (including computers). The NCTE commissions cite narrow curriculum mandates for "basic skills" and standardized testing, which focuses on such skills, as serious obstacles to higher learning today. The commissions attribute these problems to a belief on the part of the public and educational policy makers that studying the English language arts is simply a matter of learning to recognize words on a page and to use "correct" forms in writing and speaking. This limited view of language, a subject central to all learning, commissioners say, tends to retard the classroom application of new knowledge from research. It weakens teacher education and staff development efforts.

It appears that until the evidence is overwhelmingly conclusive that the process approach to teaching writing that appropriately incorporates word processing does, in fact, improve students' writing skills, this "limited view of language" may prevail. University researchers and classroom teachers need to work cooperatively to contribute to that evidence.

If you have any reactions to issues addressed in this column, please direct them to Anne Auten, P.O. 5017, College of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55102. ■

References

Emig, J. (1971). *The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Hawisher, G. E., (1986). Studies in Word Processing. *Computers & Composition: A Journal for Teachers of Writing*, November 1986.

King, D. C., & Flitterman-King, S. (1986). The Tug-of-War Is On Between Writing Approaches: Emphasis on Process Challenges the Five-Paragraph Essay. *ASCD Curriculum Update*, December 1986.

7 Staff Development

"Nothing is more dangerous
than an idea
when it is the only one
you have."

Emile Chartier
Philosopher

Creating the Personal "Hook"

Staff Development Ideas to Get Teachers Started

Bernajean Porter

"Learning to be proficient at something new and finding meaning in a new way of doing things requires extra time and extra energy. The comfort of a teacher's status quo versus the stressful demands of change requires a highly personal, relaxed, hands-on experience with computers. Change is a gradual, experienced process—not an event or a decision. Creating a positive, successful first experience with computers will "hook" new users into investing additional energy in further learning. Enthusiasm can be contagious!"

Learn Microcomputer Skills with Software

Use software programs like Print Shop (Broderbund), SuperPrint (Scholastic), or Certificate Maker (Springboard) to learn basic microcomputer skills while producing a "make and take." Skills and information are learned when needed rather than learned as content to use later.

Basic Microcomputer Skills Checklist

- ✓ Turning on the computer
- ✓ Re-booting from the keyboard
- ✓ Identifying special function keys (e.g., Return, ESC, caps lock, option key)
- ✓ Using a data disk
- ✓ Understanding a menu
- ✓ Understanding a catalog
- ✓ Understanding how to create a data disk
- ✓ Accessing a printer
- ✓ Loading computer paper and ribbons

Introduce Useful Tools

• Use Crossword Magic (Mindscape) or Puzzles & Posters (MECC) to create a class quiz, content vocabulary review, film study guide, or foreign language review. Use classmates' names as a "who's who" get-acquainted activity. Basic computer skills can be reinforced.

• Use SuperPrint (Scholastic), Create with Garfield (DLM) or Teddy Bear-rels of Fun (DLM) to create BIG BOOKS for young readers or special stationary for friends and family.

• Use an electronic gradebook program. Grading software programs allow last minute grades and projects to be added the morning or afternoon grades are due. Precise individual reports can be printed for parent conferences, weekly parent reports, and office or counselor referrals. A weekly, posted class printout can help students monitor and take responsibility for their own accumulated progress and study habits. [Special note: If at all possible, use a gradebook program that can be sent home with the teachers.]

• Use a word processing program to introduce teachers to basic word processing concepts.

1. Compose an acrostic poem with personal names. Using each letter of the first and last name vertically, write a poem that describes something about the person. Save and print. Make one copy (decorated with Print Shop optional) for a published class book and one copy to take home.

2. Create tests or quizzes. Practice modifying files by moving the test questions or the answers around to create different versions of the same test. Practice deleting or adding questions to update a test file.

3. Create a personal resume.

4. Create parent reports. Use find and replace features to change parent/student or school names. Special note: Use a word processing program presently available to all teachers. Consider FrEd Writer, a public domain word processor.

Word Processing Concepts Checklist

- ✓ Scrolling
- ✓ Using word wrap versus return
- ✓ Saving a file
- ✓ Creating file names
- ✓ Retrieving a file
- ✓ Inserting and deleting text
- ✓ Inserting and deleting "space"
- ✓ Moving text
- ✓ Finding and replacing words and phrases
- ✓ Accessing the printer

• Use a data base program to introduce teachers to basic data base concepts.

1. Create a student data base.
2. Create a library data base of books read by teachers or students.
3. Create an address data base of things, people, or places that students can write to for free or inexpensive materials or information.
4. Create mailing labels.
5. Create a "mail merge" with the parent report letter word processed earlier if individual data base software allows.

Data Base Concepts Checklist

- ✓ File
- ✓ Record
- ✓ Field or category
- ✓ Template
- ✓ Saving a file
- ✓ Creating file names
- ✓ Retrieving a file
- ✓ Adding new records
- ✓ Deleting records
- ✓ Sorting records
- ✓ Searching records
- ✓ Updating information

Evaluating Software

• Demonstrate basic types of software categories. Design a simple checklist of features and overall opinion. Set up round robin stations and have teachers rotate in small groups to look at software. Be sure to include a wide range of software types. Use software available in buildings or districts if possible. Finally, share each group's observations.

• Conduct a class game with Crosscountry USA (Diatech). What role did computer play? What kind of learning took place? What questions did the software game raise? How did the group solve them? What type of software is it?

• Divide teachers into pairs to review, evaluate, and finally demonstrate one software program to the whole class. Brainstorm how the software does/does not make a curriculum connection. What is the educational value?

Have a Jolly Good Time!

• Use the T-Shirt Shop (Spinnaker) to create personalized clothes in class.

• Have candy bars or software prizes for teachers with fastest answers, most tolerance, first file lost, first printer stuck, most endurance, best sense of humor, or most converted computer user!

• Create a class published book of acrostic poems.

• Give Certificates of Accomplishment to teachers and mail one to their supervisor. They deserve the applause for taking their first plunge into technology! ¶

[Bernajean Porter, Sr. Educational Technology Coordinator, Colorado Department of Education, 201 E. Colfax, Denver, CO 80203.]

Training the Second Wave

Jon Madian

Julie Chan, a language arts coordinator with computer savvy, recently explained that administrators responsible for staff development are faced with training the second wave of teachers to use computers. Her point was that those individuals who were instinctively drawn to computers have already surfaced, trained themselves, and are probably leaders in their schools and districts. Now, we face the problem of training teachers who were not, and often still are not, attracted to computers.

How do we go about training this "second wave" of teachers?

Administrative Support for Computer Assisted Instruction

Any successful staff development program requires support from district and school site administrators. In order for school and district personnel to motivate teachers, and in order to build a sensible curriculum and staff development program, administrators need a clear view of the benefits computers provide to instruction, and they need to communicate this view to their staffs.

A Clear Vision

Thus far, there are four general areas where computers are impacting instruction: content instruction through tutorials; problem solving through games and simulations; programming; and productivity tools such as data bases, spreadsheets and word processors. The versatility of productivity tools offers the broadest promise for education, and of the three tools, word processing clearly is the most relevant. Vocationally, word processing is the most common computer-related job. Of greater significance for education, however, word processing provides ways to streamline reading and language arts instruction at all levels.

For this streamlining to occur, language arts instruction needs to be student- and teacher-centered. In schools where the emphasis has been upon grammar, spelling, and mechanics in preparation for multiple choice skills assessments, teachers will need considerable support to give up teaching each skill separately in order to embrace a whole language approach where skills are learned at the application level.

Word Processing and Process Writing: A Natural Marriage

Although word processing and the process writing approach developed separately, they were made for each other. Each step of the writing process has a parallel in the functions of word processing. In fact, you can evaluate word processing programs based upon how the word processor supports each step in the writing process: prewriting, composing, revising, editing, and publishing.

It is only at the first two levels (prewriting and composing) that the value of the word processor might be questioned for the beginning writer. Here, some would argue that a scratch pad, blackboard or butcher paper works as well for brainstorming and mapping, and that children whose typing skills don't surpass their penmanship should continue to write by hand. But, on further review, even here we see that the motivational aspect of brainstorming and composing at the computer can literally make writers of nonwriters.

Beyond the motivational benefits at the prewriting and composing level, there are the functional values. The ability to change the order of idea fragments, to eliminate irrelevant material, and to sort and recombine ideas make the word processor an excellent prewriting tool.

If there is reasonable debate about the utility of word processing for prewriting and composing, there is no debate when looking at the revision and editing stages. Research has shown that students who were poor typists when composing still came out ahead working on the word processor because when they revised and edited their work they were so much more efficient, not to mention more motivated.

Revision is one of the best ways we have to instruct thinking, writing, and reading. Without word processing, it is nearly impossible to motivate students to work at revision. With word processing, students become involved in peer editing and will enthusiastically work their writing through several drafts with the advice and support of their writing group.

At the publishing level, the impact of word processing correctly is compared with the Gutenberg press. Indeed, had Roach Van Allen and the language experience practitioners had word processing available to them, their philosophy and methods would have had an even greater impact, for their weakest link was their emphasis upon publishing. In those precomputer days, publishing almost always meant a student rewriting his manuscript like an ancient Jesuit.

As teachers learn to use word processing, they learn the basics of using computers. They gain a powerful tool for their own work of communicating with parents and students and for designing and printing lessons. Indeed, some have argued that word processing with its ability to interact with related data bases, including encyclopedias and other online accessible information, will become the axle around which the post textbook curriculum era will rotate.

Tom Snyder, President of Tom Snyder Productions, talks about designing software that puts teachers inside rather than outside the instructional loop. Word processing empowers teachers to interact with students around the students' and their own writing. When students and teachers work together to learn to write and to publish their writings in poetry and story anthologies, newspapers, and cookbooks, the computer, which futurists once thought would isolate students, functions to stimulate social interaction and to enrich the cultural life of the classroom. The flexible and social nature of the computer means that cooperative learning strategies apply at each stage of the writing process, from prewriting through publication.

Elements of Staff Development

If we agree that word processing is the right place to begin staff development for our second wave of teachers, the next problem is how to design the actual workshops.

The Covina Valley School District recently faced this problem. Janet Ward wrote a grant that provided funds for a few computers and some staff development for 11 elementary schools with a focus on word processing and keyboarding. The problem, however, was that they only had funds for a few release days for all the teachers and only a small budget for consultants. The answer was to hire a consultant to train one "leader" (many of them first wave computer activists) from each school. For two days the consultant met with the 11 teachers and 2 computer lab aides. Acting as a facilitator, the consultant helped the group design a set of two half-day introductory staff development workshops to introduce teachers to how to use word processing in their classrooms.

They set up this training agenda:

1. One hour on the mechanics of a computer, disk drive, monitor, program, and floppy disk and how they hook together and interact—just the basics, so if a monitor doesn't go on, they can do some initial investigating.

2. Thirty minutes covering the features common to all word processors and how word processing connects with the writing process.

3. Three hours learning to use the district-selected word processor, going from the basics of booting up and initializing a data diskette, use of insert and strike over cursors, move and copy features, to save and print. Learning word processing is like learning to drive a car—you need time behind the wheel—and hands-on experience was emphasized.

4. One hour on strategies for managing with one or more computers in the classroom, or for coordinating classroom instruction with lab activities.

5. One hour for writing and publishing an acrostic and chant poem, so teachers would leave the workshop with the same product that they would have their students produce. Writing and publishing poetry was chosen as a culmination in order to give teachers a simple, attainable goal with their students—to write and publish an anthology of simple poems.

The first day of training for the trainers focused on creating the agenda for the two half-day workshops they would be leading. This process led to spirited debate about all kinds of issues, many of which have no clear answer. The second day was spent having two trainers present their interpretation of the workshop everyone would be teaching according to the first day's agenda. Teaching this demonstration workshop as if the other leaders were novice teachers led to lots of new ideas and revision of the time frames, which cut in half the content of what many teachers initially thought would be covered.

Two subsequent half-day workshops are planned to discuss managemen: strategies for using one computer in a classroom and for aligning classroom and computer lab activities for both word processing and keyboarding. These sessions will provide lots of hands-on computer time experimenting with different writing activities, beginning with writing letters to parents about the writing process and word processing, simile, metaphor and transformation poems, and writing stories in the round, with each teacher adding one line to everyone else's story.

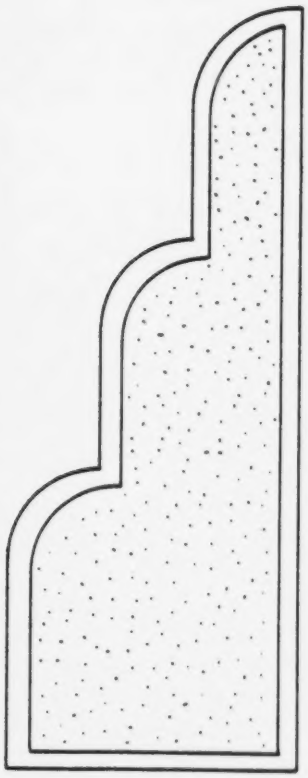
The Administrator's Role in the Second Wave

As the administrator, you will want to help the leaders and teachers-in-training set realistic goals so that they will be successful. You will want to assure them of the long-term importance of learning to use computers for instruction, and particularly of the value of using word processing in language arts. By setting simple "we all learn as we go" goals, the trainers and the second wave of teachers will feel that they are succeeding in exploring and utilizing an exciting new educational tool. ❡

[Jon Madian, Humanities Software, P.O. Box 950, Hood River, OR 97031.]

In the Words of One Teacher

C omputers scared me
O h, I didn't want one in
M y room. . . until I plunged and
P layed with word processing and
U nderstood it could help me to
T hink and create. What an
E xcellent tool to teach
R eading and writing.

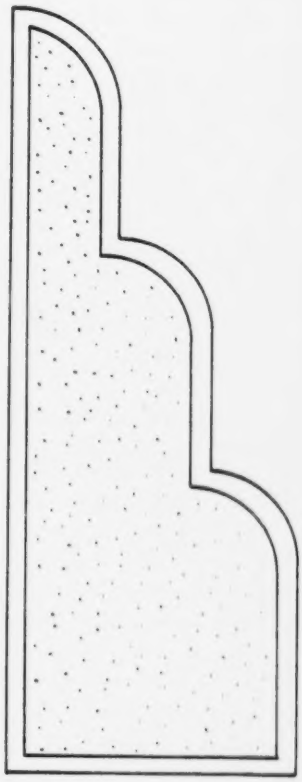


In her classroom our speculations ranged the world. She breathed curiosity into us so that each morning we came to her class carrying new truths, new facts, new ideas, cupped and shielded in our hands like captured fireflies.

When she went away, a sadness came over us; but the light did not go out. She had written her signature upon us; the literature of the teacher who writes on children's minds.

I have had many teachers who taught me soon forgotten things, but only a few like her who created in me a new direction, a new hunger, a new attitude. I suppose to a large extent I am the unsigned manuscript of that teacher. What deathless power lies in the hands of such a person.

John Steinbeck
"On A Former Teacher"



From Cave Walls to Computers:
Using the Computer to Teach Content Through Writing

Sheryl Jones

This article describes inservice training that took place in Jefferson County, CO, Public Schools. The training came about as a way to help teachers use the Cave Walls guide developed for the county on using the computer as a writing tool across the curriculum. The training consisted of three parts: (a) promoting the writing self-confidence of the teacher; (b) introducing the writing across the curriculum concept, using the writing process and critical thinking skills; and (c) adapting the writing concepts to an individual classroom, teaching style, and content area. Teachers used the word processing program available to students in their school.

Writing tools indeed have changed since early man wrote on cave walls. However, those ancient petroglyphs remain today as an example of the writing process: drawings partially completed, as if "trying out" the idea; a final drawing off to the side or down below, wherever the cave wall was smooth enough to "write" upon; and examples of places where it is obvious that erasures were made and a line or "word" revised.

To begin the "Cave Walls" inservice, we wanted teachers to experience the "process" of writing for themselves— and to increase their own self-confidence in writing. They were asked to "write about the person you would most like to influence, or the person who most influenced you." For 5 hours the participants wrote, conferenced, and rewrote, using the writing process and the word processor to create a final document.

The next several class meetings allowed teachers to experience the same writing assignments they give to their students. They wrote a descriptive paragraph about autumn from the fourth grade language arts curriculum. They used a fifth grade math activity to create a business, and wrote word problems requesting information on total cost, discount, profit, and loss. They wrote an opinion paper about environmental issues from the eighth grade science curriculum. And in the process, they went through the same thinking/writing processes they asked of their students.

The teachers composed directly at the computer after their prewriting activities. In addition, each teacher kept a day-book, using the word processor as a writing tool, which included their responses to the writing assignments they gave to students using the word processor for writing.

Teachers learned how to use deep processing, a technique developed by Dr. Robert Marzano, to teach students higher order thinking and how to apply that to the writing process. Deep processing consists of four interconnected parts, all of which must be present: First, the student must be able to create a mental image of what is being read or written. Second, some physical response using one of the five senses must occur. Third, an emotional response to the work should be felt. Finally, the student must be able to verbalize that mental image and physical and emotional response.

The final class sessions were used to adapt activities from one level to another. A fourth grade teacher adapted an eighth grade social studies activity, "Journal of an Immigrant," to her students' study of the crayfish; each crayfish wrote a journal of his or her capture and study by the fourth graders. The result? A delightful use of first person narrative using scientific terms; for example, "My swimmerets work . . . ." and ". . . poked me on one of my eye stalks."

A twelfth grade teacher used the seventh grade language arts "Character Analysis" to lead his students into a more sophisticated analysis of Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" by asking them to analyze the person with the locker next to theirs by observing the contents of that locker.

A teacher of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students with significant intellectual, emotional, and behavioral disorders used the fifth grade math activity, creating a business, and found that students really wanted to start a business. They made friendship bracelets in their spare time and sold them to other students. In the process, they learned about writing word problems, how to design a spreadsheet to keep track of orders, to put together a catalog of colors and designs for potential buyers to choose from, and perhaps most important, they interacted positively with other students in the school. Their final learning experience will be deciding how to spend the money they have earned.

115

Here are some responses from the 29 teachers, all but one of whom used the guide and encouraged their students to use the computer as a tool for writing—in language arts, math, science, and social studies!

"This project has been invaluable to me and my students . . . in creating new and exciting learning avenues." (teacher of students with disabilities)

The Cave Walls project . . . has made me aware of the importance of computers as a writing tool for my students. I had never seriously imagined the feasibility of using them for ongoing class writing assignments. Now that appears to be a distinct possibility and a desirable outcome. Especially interesting was the way I was able to adapt, almost without change, assignments from the lower grade levels." (senior high teacher)

"I am more aware of the value of writing in all areas. Sixth graders need more expository writing experiences. This should be a required class for all teachers!" (sixth grade teacher)

And what about the students? Elementary students believed they wrote better using the computer because they could "erase and the mistakes don't show." "Ideas flow, because we can read what we are writing." They also liked word processing for very practical reasons: "Our hands don't get tired, and our fingers don't cramp." "I don't get ink on my fingers." "I can have lots of copies, and the computer never runs out of paper."

On the other hand, they did find using the keyboard frustrating. "Sometimes before I find the right key, I lose my thought and then I have to rethink it."

Senior high students, however, did not express any frustrations with the computer or word processing programs. They said it was "faster, more efficient, saved time, and made revision easy." They said they "received better grades when they used the computer for writing, and that it made writing assignments easier to complete."

From cave walls to computers—time passes and tools change, but the process remains largely the same. The computer makes writing on today's "cave walls" so much easier, but I wonder. . . what will the next writing tool be? Are our "files" the petroglyphs of the future? ¶

[The Cave Walls project is funded through ECIA Chap. 2. Special thanks to the program managers and resource specialists in math, science, social studies, and language arts, with special thanks to Jan Bybee, Program Manager for Computer Science, and Paula Hodges-McClain, Coordinator of Language Arts. For further information about the Cave Walls guidebook or this project, contact Sheryl Jones, Computer Science Department, Jefferson County Public Schools, 1829 Denver West Drive, Bldg. 27, Golden, CO 80401.]

Staff Development in Publishing Student Writing:
An Interview with Ken Spurlock

Sharon Franklin

Ken, I heard that you recently conducted a very successful inservice in publishing student writing. Can you give us some of the specifics?

I'd be pleased to do that! Fifty teachers, many of them directors of writing projects in Kentucky, attended the Publications Workshop at Holmes High School in January of this year. They came because they were interested in starting literary magazines in their schools.

The purpose of the workshop was to help people who wanted to publish student writing get started. All types of publication ideas were discussed (Ed. note: See the copy of one handout, "Publishing Student Writing"). Teachers also wanted to discuss ways to encourage young people to write better and to create interest in writing in their schools. They wanted to be able to motivate their students to share their writing with an audience beyond the walls of the classroom.

Teachers who had never before attempted a literary magazine learned the basic steps involved in putting one out, including some hands-on experience in laying out pages, creating a dummy book, and planning a publication from start to finish.

How did you deal with the various hardware and software available to teachers in their buildings? It sounds as though this could not be a "desktop publishing workshop" per se, because the same system would not be in place at all schools.

You're absolutely right! Although I use a Mac Plus, the focus of this workshop was on publishing student writing in whatever ways were available to each teacher. As a matter of fact, I chose not to use the Mac for demonstrations during the workshop. Instead, I asked each participant to send me a piece of writing prior to the workshop. These pieces were produced using the Mac Plus and the LaserWriter and then distributed to participants to use in laying out their dummy books. In this way, although no one really got to sit down at the Mac, they all saw very graphically what the Mac could do. The copy looked great, and I'm sure that seeing their own work produced on the Mac made the participants think about the value of having such a system available to them. I did stress how wonderful it was using the Mac to produce *Horizons*, the Holmes High School literary magazine.

What materials did you have available in terms of hardware, software, other materials, examples, and so forth?

I used several handouts created on the Mac, but I used no other specific software, hardware, or other visuals.

I *did* have real live people, however! Some of the students published in *Horizons* last year read their pieces from the magazine. I thought it was super. It is nice to read what students write, but having them read their work in their own voices is special. Several consultants who had produced magazines on the elementary and junior high level also spoke, and Chris Lord, the associate editor of *Merlyn's Pen*, a national magazine of student writing, spoke on publishing from her point of view.

I also had examples of literary magazines from all over the country for the participants to examine, some of which were created on word processors. Oh, and I gave the participants layout sheets I had created for a magazine with a one-column format.

Besides supplying you with a writing sample prior to the inservice, were the participants asked to bring anything else? I guess what I'm asking is, were people asked to have a goal—a project of some sort—in mind to work on during the inservice?

The goal was to use the writing submitted to me before the workshop to lay out pages using the cut and paste process most of them would have to use in their schools. The ultimate goal was to give them experience in planning pages for their own magazines of student writing, so I guess you could say that this workshop simulated the experience they would have in their own schools, rather than completing even a simple project of their own during the workshop.

How long was the inservice, and how did you organize the time available?

We met on a Thursday night in the school library from 7 to 9 p.m. for the opening session. Then we returned at 8:30 the next morning and worked until 3:30 on Friday.

We moved from a discussion of why participants wanted to publish student writing to ways to get the writing to an audience beyond the classroom, focusing specifically on producing a magazine of student writing. The most important feature of the workshop was the interaction of the teachers with each other. They openly shared their ideas about writing and publishing throughout the workshop.

What did you learn? What would you recommend for someone else planning staff development along these lines?

I learned that hosting a workshop is more work than I ever imagined! But when it came to actually meeting and working with everyone, I enjoyed it immensely. I would recommend that anyone designing a similar workshop plan for more time. I think I tried to cover too much in too short a time frame.

*One last question, Ken, and I thank you for taking the time to share your experiences with **The Writing Notebook** readers. With all the possible topics for staff development, why should a district consider this one? And where do you see desktop publishing in schools heading? Anything unusual or interesting on the horizon?*

The major reason for considering staff development in this area is that the writing process is not really complete, in my opinion, until it is shared with others. Publishing seems to me to be a natural end of the process of being a writer. To that end, there are lots of ways to "publish" student writing, an idea that the "Publishing Student Writing" handout gets across nicely. And, of course, the more that teachers begin to routinely think about publishing and sharing student writing, the more desktop publishing hardware and software will be a valued and important part of each school and even department.

I see desktop publishing being used in nearly every English classroom in the future, with individual teachers in many different subject areas publishing anthologies of their students' best writing on a regular basis, certainly more frequently than once or twice a year. I foresee students creating their own books in groups that resemble small publishing houses. ¶

[For further information on publishing student writing, contact Ken Spurlock, Covington Independent Public Schools, 25 East 7th Street, Covington, KY 41011.]

Publishing Student Writing

- **Have each class develop a folder into which students place their best piece of writing for a grade period or semester. This folder may be shared with parents, other classes, etc.**
- **Allow volunteer students to read their best writing over the school intercom.**
- **Plan a school assembly for your writers to read their works.**
- **Post good writing in the classroom, in the halls, in the library, in the counselor's or principal's office, at the board of education—anywhere others might read it.**
- **Publish occasional "broadsheets" (11 x 14 typed sheets, front and back) of the best writing from each class.**
- **Check with the local newspaper to see if the editor will publish students' writing on a regular basis.**
- **Display poetry, collages, mobiles, or posters done by students around the school or in store windows in the community.**
- **Produce audio cassettes of students reading their poems, essays, and stories. Play them in the school over the intercom during homeroom, in other classes, or on the local radio station.**
- **Produce videos of students reading their work; show them in school or give permission for the local TV station to show them.**
- **Publish class anthologies by simply binding together pieces of writing of a certain type (vignettes, cinquains, free verse, etc.) with an appropriate cover.**
- **Ask local civic groups (Lions Club, etc.) or businesses (insurance agencies, department stores, restaurants) to sponsor various writing contests or to display student writing.**
- **Give extra credit to any student who discovers a new writing contest. Then encourage all class members to enter!**
- **Make students aware of good magazines that publish student writing such as *Merlyn's Pen, Scope, Voice, The Shagbark Review, The Medalist*, etc., and give them class time to write for submission.**

TRAINING FOR TECHNOLOGY — ARE YOU READY?

Carol Bly

Imagine that you finally have enough money to install an integrated video, computer, and communication system designed specifically to address your school's curriculum needs.

This is being experienced by teachers at three schools within the Sacramento City Unified School District. Sacramento is one of five school districts funded by the State of California's Model Technology Schools Project (MTS). As such, Sacramento has the opportunity to explore integrating technology into the curriculum by enhancing communication and higher-order thinking skills.

Our hypothetical MTS teacher, Mary Smith, is an elementary science specialist who has developed a unit of instruction for a sixth grade class in which the students will be exploring the development, history, and impact of volcanoes. Over the course of the unit, students will view video tapes and laser disks. On networked computer systems, they will work with software and access data bases through the use of file servers, modems, and CD-ROMS. They will conduct interviews using computer and telephone technology, design volcanoes with graphics programs, tape simulations using a video camera and a VCR, and work extensively with a word processing program. Their final reports will be presented through video and desktop publishing resources.

Teaching will forever be a decision-making process. In developing the above unit, Mary first had to determine the lesson objective. What was she was going to teach? She needed to determine student readiness, learning styles, and prerequisite skills. She also needed to identify expected student and teacher behaviors. What would the students do to demonstrate that they had achieved the objective, and what would Mary need to do to assist students?

New issues emerge along with the new technology as teachers begin to shape their lessons and determine the availability of materials and equipment. For example, if the software is networked, have the lessons been previously assigned to the students? Will the teacher need to spend time learning and working with the management program? Will additional hardware need to be attached to the system for this activity? What is the availability of the networked computer and video system? Will the laser disks and video tapes be accessible when needed?

Using a standard lesson plan format, the teacher needs to determine when the technology might be used within the lesson. Should a small portion of the laser disk be shown as a part of the opening portion of the lesson to draw student attention to the information, or would it be better at the end to encourage questions about the topic? Most important, teachers need to consider when it is appropriate to use sophisticated systems, rather than something as traditional as a pencil and paper activity.

As a trainer working with teachers on this integration of technology in their curriculum, I have seen technology-related inservices go through a process of transition. In the early years of computers, many teachers were trying to find the on/off switches and learn how to work simple drill and practice programs. Now that both hardware and software have become more user-friendly, teachers are rushing to take advantage of tools such as powerful word processors, which allow students the freedom to focus on the content of their writing rather than worrying about the length of time they will spend on revision. No longer satisfied with the limits of computer technology, teachers are actively pursuing the uses of video cameras, laser disks, modems—and the list goes on.

To provide the most needed assistance to these teachers, trainers are faced with new decisions in designing inservices. Preferably, after conducting a needs assessment, trainers will determine teachers' experiences with different technologies and teaching strategies. In addition, they will need to become familiar with the new types of systems that will be available at the school sites. Also important is the configuration of the systems installed. Teachers using computers in a lab setting will need to use management strategies that are different from those used by teachers with access to one computer in their classroom.

Off-Line Training

The timing of the installation of systems must also be considered to ensure that strategies gained through inservices can be immediately practiced at the sites. Often, schools find installations delayed; not only may they have to wait for the shipment of equipment, but they also may discover that they need additional power, cabling, security, or furniture. Although the total installation will take time,

this waiting period need not be wasted. We have found that teachers with a background in effective teaching strategies, classroom management, cooperative learning, curriculum focus, higher-order thinking skills, and software evaluation can much more readily integrate technology into their curriculum. In the case of the MTS, most of the elementary level teachers had an extensive background in these teaching skills; however, we did find it helpful to schedule training for the teachers in the area of process writing. With a common writing base, it is easier for staff members to articulate their uses of word processing in implementing writing across the curriculum.

Schools can also become acquainted with selected pieces of equipment while they are waiting for the entire installation. For example, at two of our schools, mentor teachers equipped the staff lounges with several computers and printers. Cooperating teachers agreed to "man" these systems during the breaks to demonstrate the potential of using a word processor to teachers who had never before worked with these programs. Although their exposure has been limited, these teachers will more readily grasp the basics when their formal training begins.

On-Line Training

Once the equipment is ready for teachers to use, a 4-phase training process begins. During Phase 1, teachers are introduced to the new hardware/software through a combination of demonstration and coaching of hands-on experiences. A focus of the Sacramento MTS project is communication skills development, with the word processor providing a natural starting place. Early teacher training focused on the more common features found in word processors and will continue using the computer as well as other technologies to enhance writing skills.

Phase 2 is a continuation of the first. During this period, teachers continue to work with new hardware/ software, but the focus of the session provides teachers with more opportunities for unstructured time to work with the new system, coupled with nurturing support.

By Phase 3, teachers feel more comfortable with the systems and are ready to see how the technology can become a natural part of their lessons. During this period, teachers are presented with strategies for incorporating the technology into their own curriculum.

In the final phase of inservice, teachers are given an unstructured environment in which they can begin to develop their own technology integrated lessons with nearby "coaches" available to offer assistance as needed.

Summary

The graduating class of the year 2000 entered kindergarten this year. These students will be confronted with technology on a scale we cannot even imagine today. We must prepare teachers to change their role from that of dispenser of great wisdom to that of a coach or facilitator of knowledge, guiding and supporting students as they gain and develop new skills. More than ever, teachers will need to draw upon the resources of other staff members and outside consultants. With careful planning, staff development can provide the support necessary to assist teachers in making the best use of the advantages provided them through technology. ¶

General Recommendations

- To be most effective, inservices must be based upon the results of needs assessments and staff input.
- The inservices provided should model effective teaching and cooperative learning strategies.
- Presenters should integrate technology, when appropriate, as a natural part of their own presentations.
- During the early phases of using new systems, trainers should schedule frequent site visitations to provide timely support and troubleshooting.
- Teachers should be encouraged to network and provide peer support.
- Administrators should explore opportunities to support their "seeds." In other words, if a teacher shows particular interest in desktop publishing, robotics, electronic communication, etc., the entire school could potentially benefit from this teacher researching the subject. This teacher may then, in turn, become a mentor to work with other teachers who have developed an interest in the same area.
- No one person will have the skills needed to provide training in all areas of the curriculum and technology. Training coordinators need to use not only training specialists, but also site teachers, mentor teachers, vendors, community representatives, and consultants. The district should develop a network with surrounding districts and share resources whenever possible.
- Trainers will need to monitor the progress of inservice participants as they begin using the systems with their students—some may be tomorrow's trainers.
- All technology training must focus on and be appropriately integrated with the curriculum it addresses.

[Carol Bly, Coordinator of Technology Staff Development, Sacramento City Unified School District, Staff Development Services Department, 4701 Joaquin Way, Sacramento, CA 95630; ph. 916/454-8227 or 454-8669.]

Horton Watkins High School: Mobilizing Resources in Technology

Harriette Arkin

In 1983, Horton Watkins High School in Ladue, Missouri, had one computer lab with 10 TI's and 20 Apple computers. How did they grow in the short span of five years to a Computer Center that includes a main lab, an English writing lab, a math and business lab, and an electronic classroom, with additional computers in nine departments and the library? The Ladue School District's overall staff development plan played a leading role, as well as district philosophy regarding community education. This article focuses on how one district and school solved the problem of access to technology for their students, teachers, parents, and the community. Their story provides some real possibilities for replication in other schools and districts.

—Ed.

THE COMPUTER CENTER: A BRIEF TOUR

Main Room

The main room of the center contains 14 IBM PC, 20 Apple //e, 2 Apple //gs, and 9 Macintosh Plus computers, one additional Macintosh Plus used as the file server, and two 20-megabyte hard drives. The Macintosh computers are networked using AppleShare, AppleTalk, and LaserShare, and are connected to the English writing lab next door via an interbridge. Every two Apple //e's and IBM PC's are connected to a printer via a data switch box. A modem allows students and faculty to access *Dialog* and *Compuserve*; debate, English, chemistry, and social studies students and faculty regularly use these databases.

This room is arranged much like a library. All software and books are catalogued using the Dewey Decimal System and Sears subject headings. Software is kept in hanging files and arranged according to Dewey number. The catalog, generated on a database, is easy for both students and faculty to use. The center has a collection of over 400 software packages and subscribes to over 25 magazines appropriate for both students and faculty. Students may check out any piece of software for use in the center by presenting their library card at the desk; magazines and books may be checked out for several days. Vertical files on various computer topics, *Software Reviews On File*, and *Microcomputer Index* also are available.

The lab is staffed by a full-time teacher and secretary. English, social studies, foreign language, chemistry, physics, home economics, and several business classes use the center, as well as individual students, who come to the lab to work during their free time. It is also accessible for students with disabilities, including one student who is blind.

The English Writing Lab

This lab has 21 Macintosh Plus computers and 1 Macintosh SE, which functions as the file server; two 40-megabyte hard drives; and seven Imagewriter printers and one LaserWriter Plus, which are shared via AppleTalk and LaserShare. The entire English department uses the lab; the school newspaper and yearbook are produced here, aided by *MacWrite*, *MacDraw*, *MacPaint*, *Cricket Graph*, *Cricket Draw*, and *Pagemaker*. With the exception of photographs, all layout is produced on the computer, including the design of professional-looking ads.

Classroom teachers accompany their classes to the lab, and an English teacher is also available in the lab during most of the day. Over 700 students were trained in this writing lab last year.

The Electronic Classroom

The required applications course that includes instruction in *pfs: File*, *Report*, *Write*, *Graph*, and *VisiCalc* is taught in this classroom. The room contains 21 Apple //e's connected to a large screen, with two computers sharing a printer via a data switch box. Teachers may use the large screen to project a student's work or for a demonstration.

Math and Business Lab

The math and business lab has 20 Apple //e computers, with two computers sharing a printer via a data switch box. Programming classes, keyboarding, beginning word processing classes, beginning accounting classes, and computer SAT classes are conducted in this lab.

COMPUTERS IN OTHER AREAS

The school library has an on-line catalog for its 26,000-volume collection. Three computers, two hard drives, one floppy drive, and three printers are housed here.

One or more computers also are found in various departments, including foreign language, social studies, special services, English, journalism, chemistry, biology, physics, and auto mechanics.

[Harriette Arkin, Computer Center Director, Horton Watkins High School, 1201 South Warson Road, St. Louis, MO 63124.]

The Ladue Staff Development Program

Elizabeth Schwartz

Instructional computers in the Ladue schools have increased from a very few in 1980 to the present ratio of 1:12 in grades K-12. Although there has been a dramatic growth in the number of computers, more impressive is the competency of veteran teachers using computers in a variety of ways.

Historically, the district has provided its staff with many development opportunities. But successful implementation of the technologies in education requires a more varied and tenacious approach. Staff development in this rapidly changing area demands much more than technical training.

Computer technology staff development efforts in Ladue include:

- Technical training and related methods for effective teaching;
- Opportunities for experimentation;
- New and varied hands-on experiences for staff using the technologies;
- Computer access and home computers for teachers;
- Curriculum development and revision; and
- Ongoing support, including district financial assistance and revenue generated by out-of-school offerings.

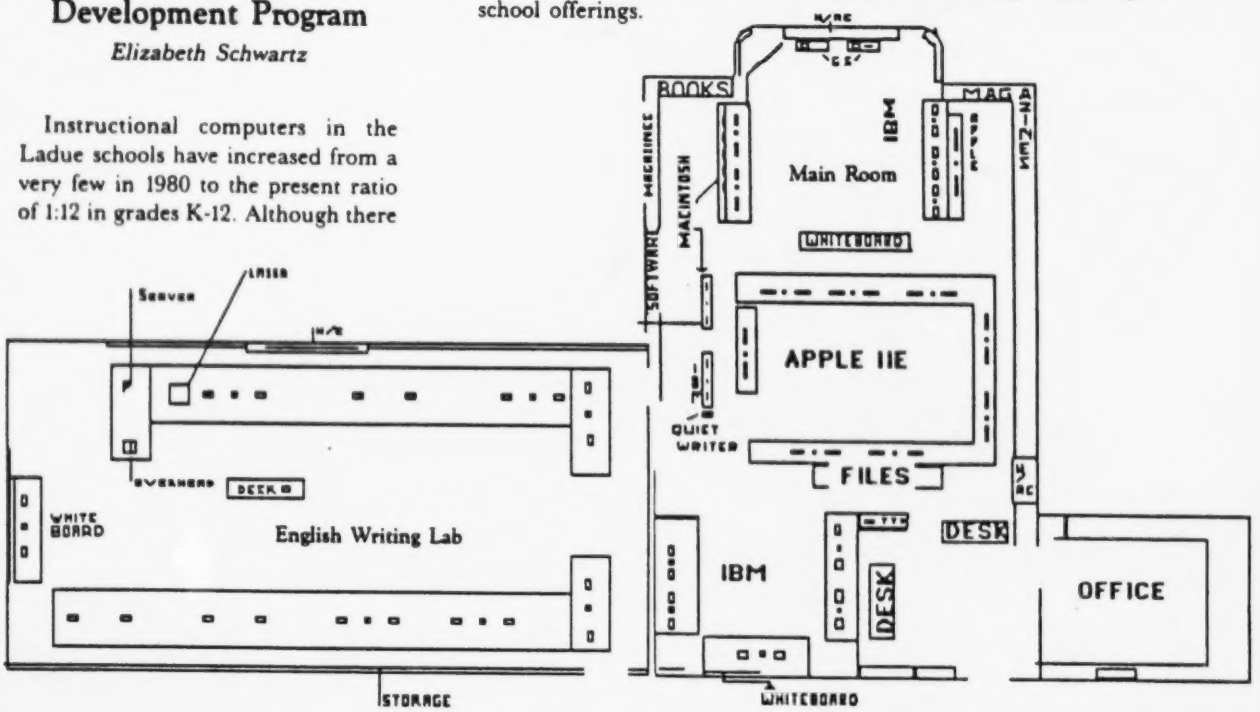
DIRECT TRAINING

Teachers Training Teachers

A district's own teachers are often the best resources for the training of other teachers. Ladue capitalizes on the capabilities of an already outstanding staff. As various staff members become competent, they are asked to teach courses for their colleagues. Surveys are sent to all personnel semi-annually, asking not only what each person would like to *learn*, but what each person might be able to *teach* others.

As a result, 90 percent of the computer staff development has been done by in-house staff. Teachers with new experience or expertise help others acquire the needed skills. The geometric effect has resulted in nearly all the teaching staff acquiring basic computer skills and with 20 percent classified as leading-edge teachers in the use of computer technology in their teaching area.

Mastering technical skills is important to the success of computer use in schools, but most valuable is how those newly acquired skills will be used to enhance learning. Workshops on to-



pics such as "Higher Level Thinking Skill Development," "Questions for Higher Level Thinking," "Relating Effective Teaching and Lesson Design," "Writing Across the Curriculum," and "Written Language Approaches and Strategies" are as much a part of the staff development model as is the instruction in the use of hardware and software.

Technical courses and workshops are provided at no cost to district personnel. Large numbers of staff have enrolled in the courses and workshops most often taught by their peers. Contributing to the high participation in staff development opportunities is a 30-year-old incentive-based salary system which monetarily rewards teachers for outstanding performance in the classroom, as well as for other contributions to the district.

Sabbatical Leave Program/ Teacher Assistance Program

Through the sabbatical leave program, teachers participate in advanced study while on leave at district expense. Through the teacher assistance program, staff members are financially supported in course work or workshops that will enhance their teaching.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Hi-U Program

Hi-U symbolizes high interest, high challenge, tuition-supported classes originally developed for elementary school students. Initiated to provide enrichment programming, the Hi-U venture has grown from a few offerings to numerous technology-related courses which have enrolled over 2,000 persons of *all* ages after school, evenings, and on Saturdays.

More than one-half of the elementary teachers and a one-quarter of the secondary staff have taught or assisted in at least one Hi-U course. When asked what has contributed most to their level of computer expertise, most staff members attribute their competency to their out-of-school participation in the Hi-U program.

The teaching staff benefits from use of the computer center at Horton Watkins High School. The center was perceived as a community resource "on loan" to the high school during regular school hours, but utilized outside of the school day by the entire community. District staff members may enroll in any of the computer courses offered to the communty on a no-fee basis.

The center provides training opportunities for local civic organizations and corporations. To date, over 500 employees of area corporations have taken classes at the center. In addition, pods of 10 to 12 computers are leased on an hourly basis to businesses who provide their own instructors. The center is open four evenings a week until 10:00 p.m. and on Saturdays, providing easy access for students, staff members, and the community.

"The computer option was an early motivator designed to upgrade the computer skills of the teaching staff. The unlimited hands-on opportunity that exists when a teacher has his or her own computer has proven to be very beneficial."

Revenues from Hi-U program tuition and rental fees for the use of district equipment and facilities beyond the school day yield approximately $200,000 annually. These revenues are used for Hi-U instructors' salaries (including the computer option) and other direct costs and have allowed for the dramatic increase in the number of computer stations in the center and for expansion of the software library.

The Computer Option

At the onset of the 1982 summer program, teachers and assistants could opt for computers; they received them immediately upon agreeing to a predetermined amount of teaching time. In that summer alone, 50 percent of Ladue's elementary teachers taught in the computer camps and exercised the computer option in lieu of a salary. The next fall, many elementary teachers were comfortably and effectively using computers with their students. The computer option was an early motivator designed to upgrade the computer skills of the teaching staff. The unlimited hands-on opportunity that exists when a teacher has his or her own computer has proven to be very beneficial.

INTEGRAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Several curriculum projects are written by selected groups of teachers each year. Materials developed specifically for technology include word processing/written language units for elementary and secondary levels; Logo challenge cards; Logo curriculum-linked projects; a handbook for interdisciplinary uses of word processing; and database, graphing, and spreadsheet applications. Mini-grants also are awarded to teachers to further develop the use of computers in their existing courses. Hi-U revenues provide hardware and software money, with the sabbatical budget covering release time.

[Elizabeth Schwartz, Assistant Superintendent of Administration, Ladue School District, 9703 Conway Rd., St. Louis, MO 63124.]

8 Publishing Student Writing

"A story must have a beginning, a middle, and an end . . . but not necessarily in that order."

jean luc-godard

Managing Students' Writing: The Writing Folder

The beginning of the year is the perfect time to have each student begin a writing folder. It will help your students to organize their writing, and it presents a clear record of writing accomplishments to be referred to at any time. Any work done on the word processor may be printed out and placed in the folder for easy access.

Toward the end of the semester or year, each student may want to select one or more of their "best" pieces for a class or school anthology.

The four sides of a writing folder may hold important pieces of information. Donald Graves' writing folder is a standard file folder with headings and information added:

Front Cover:
Books I've Written
1. Ribs (Oct. 29)
2. Treasure for Two (Nov. 6)
3. Ouch (Nov. 19)
4. Undercrisp (Dec. 3)
5. . . . .
Inside Front Cover:
Some New Ideas to Write About
1. Night in the hospital
2. Our baseball team
3. Waterskiing
4. . . . .
Back Cover:
Topics _____ [name of student] Knows Much About
1. Hospitals
2. Baseball
3. . . . .
Inside Back Cover:
Skills _____ [name of student] Can Use
1. Caps on names
2. Possessives (see "Ouch")
3. Periods (full stops)
4. Quotation marks (inverted commas)
5. . . . .

Science, etc.

A Journal of Student Science & Math Writing

Ann Sevcik

This piece has been condensed, with the author's permission, from the Northern Virginia Writing Project newsletter.

When students write and draw colorful, amusing, informative material for their science and math classes, what do you do with it? As a mother, I put it all in folders labeled "Erica" and "Matt" and filed them at home. As a high school social science teacher, I put my students' work in folders labeled "I-Search," "Experiments," and "Surveys," and filed them at school. From time to time I wondered how their work could be shared with other readers—I'd been told that our school's literary magazine couldn't incorporate it. Then one evening last March my wondering stopped. Quite suddenly, as I was reading the latest issue of a science journal, I realized that a school could also publish a journal of science and math writing!

The idea seemed obvious, but it was rather ominous. The journal needed seven or eight major academic papers on mathematics, natural and social sciences, and some news, features, book reviews, puzzles, drawings, and cartoons. Who could I find to sponsor a project like that? Certainly not myself, because I didn't have any experience, never mind expertise, in journalism or publishing. Interest was all I had to offer, and how far could that take the project? Three months later I found out. The first edition of *Science, etc.* was printed and waiting to be distributed, and I was much wiser in the ways of journalism and publishing. I was also acquainted with the science and math teachers in our building and with some students I might not have met otherwise. That was a real treat.

What happened during those three months was more natural than contrived. *Science, etc.* grew like a bean sprout in the dark, because many of Herndon High School's science and math teachers already had writing and drawing projects as part of their curricula. Basically all the journal needed was organization. It also grew because so much enthusiasm spread through and beyond the students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

The first thing I did was talk with our principal. He immediately and genuinely gave the journal his support, and he even suggested an editor who possessed what I lacked in technical know-how. I also talked with the sponsor of our literary magazine, and she gave me some pointers on how to get started in our particular school.

Then we went public. Through Herndon's general morning announcements, my editor called a meeting for any students who were interested in working on the staff of a science and math journal. Twenty-five came to the meeting and most of them stayed to see the finished product. Meanwhile, I proposed the journal idea at math and science department meetings, and I came away encouraged by my colleagues' positive reception. For the remainder of the school year, I continued to meet periodically with individual teachers, and the staff continued to meet weekly to plan the journal. We also formed four committees—finance, academic article selection, production, and art—which met separately on an as-needed basis. To my surprise, an important source of information and workers became available—parents came forward and volunteered to help. A father came to one of our early committee meetings and helped us with our plans to finance the journal, and a mother suggested our off-the-beaten-path printer and then did the road work of delivering the layout sheets and picking up the printed copies. The public, students and adults alike, gave the journal a warm reception and dependable support.

At one of our weekly meetings we brainstormed staff writing ideas—the news and feature stories on science activities, computers, puzzles, book reviews, and artwork—and students chose the assignments they wanted. At another of our weekly meetings the staff decided on the name, *Science, etc.* That was an important decision, and it had to wait until we had worked together for a while and developed a sense of what the journal would be like.

In mid-April, the academic articles committee asked students to submit material, and we devised a selection process. Thanks to the support of Herndon's science and math teachers, we had about three times as much material submitted as we could print. Each academic paper, with the author's name removed, was read and independently responded to by six or more students on the staff. If an article earned six positive responses, it was "selected." I didn't participate in the selection process, partly because my own students had submitted papers, but mainly because I knew that student readers could identify the most appropriate articles.

Along the way we raised $600 to pay for publishing. We didn't consider the usual fund-raisers of bake sales and car washes, because time was short. We did try to get sponsors and then tried to sell advertising, but people seemed to be committed to established publications. It was also too late to get money from the county. In May, the principal found $200 for our layout supplies and typesetting, and two weeks later he approved a loan of $370 for printing costs. Next year, we expect to start raising money earlier, and the fact that we are now an established publication will probably help.

Finally, the layout began. The staff worked furiously for two days and finished 40 camera-ready layout sheets. Next year we expect to spend two weeks on that task, and we also plan to investigate other forms of printing such as quality copying.

The rest is history. Vol. 1, No. 1 was very lively, and at the publication party the authors, artists, and staff were excited to see the finished product.

Sponsoring a journal of science and math writing is a fascinating activity. It's rewarding to see enthusiasm and support rise from every quarter, and it's surprising that, as sponsor, all I need to contribute is interest, organization, and the desire to work with students collaboratively. I assumed at the beginning that expertise would be necessary, but it wasn't. The most fascinating thing of all about sponsoring a high school science and math journal is that an established format does not exist, so we may invent and experiment as much as we like. Personally, I can hardly wait to see what the students will produce next year.

[Ann Sevcik is a Fellow of the Northern Virginia Writing Project.]

Spin Tales

One morning, I woke up and I found I had turned into a butterfly. I was surprised that I had turned into a butterfly. I found that I was beautiful and I had wings. I was very colorful, and I could fly. When I flew out of the window, I was flying so high. I looked down and I saw my friends going to a party. I was sad because I couldn't go to the party because now I was a butterfly. When I got home again, I turned into myself. I was happy to see myself again. My mother and father were back home. I went to the party and I brought a present for my friend. I was so happy.

Neeharika

When I looked at the trees in the schoolyard, I imagined I saw a green soldier. He protected the school. He had a brown uniform, green hat, brown shoes, a sharp sword and a machine gun. One day all the bad gangs attacked the school. They didn't know about the tree. All of a sudden, one of the strong and healthy branches swooned down and grabbed ten of the gang members and flung them into the trash can! After that, none came to bother our school again.

Paul

MULTILINGUAL VOICES

by Jayne Nishizaki, Fellow
Area III Writing Project, U.C., Davis

Promising my students that their writing would be published in a class magazine had been a time-honored technique of mine to generate excitement in my writing classes. However, last year, when I made the same promise to my newly-formed ESL writing classes, my students were less than enthusiastic—they were politely indifferent. It was not until days later that I discovered the reasons: the students did not believe me, and they did not believe they had anything to say in English because they could not write perfectly.

Beginning the year knowing that my students expected me to teach them perfection, and that I expected them to learn a communicative process, made me doubt that we would publish. But as we struggled through the first writing assignments, I rejoiced as I saw the tentative beginnings of their voices, powerful voices struggling for the words to speak their hearts. But I still did not mention publishing; they were not ready to speak their hearts yet.

Trust deepened in my students and so did the resonance in their voices. Their voices, now just a quiet whisper, spoke of survival in spite of war, of grief for lost family and country, of happiness and frustration in their new lives. Those whispers were written to me only; I hoped soon those whispers could touch more hearts than my own.

After a few months, I began to mention publishing again: first, in each student's individual conference and then in our whole-class share-and-respond sessions. Casually I would mention that a piece should be in our magazine. The story would be starred and tucked away in the writer's yearly portfolio, but the mention of the magazine was usually forgotten. Occasionally, I would ask the artists in the class to illustrate their writing, but after the picture and the piece were displayed, they were tucked again into the portfolio.

At the beginning of second semester, my students' voices were singing, laughing, and crying; I knew it was time to publish. I reminded them that if writing really communicated, if it really spoke to people's hearts, then our writing was ready to speak in our magazine. We started with a contest to select our title. Stuffed into a box were cards with 30 possible names, but the unanimous choice was "Multilingual Voices." After I posted the magazine's new name, we began a cover contest. Soon the walls were covered with samples, but once again the choice was unanimous: a chorus of people from many cultures, mouths wide-open and proud. When the finished cover was hung, excitement transformed voices into shouts: When will we see it? How many copies will I get? Will I really have something in it?

We developed a timeline charting deadlines and activities, classwork times, and magazine times. During magazine times, out came each writer's portfolio with these directions:

1. Carefully read all your writing assignments.
2. Celebrate your improvement.
3. Choose the best two or three pieces that are the strongest, most powerful.
4. Revise. Revise. Revise.
5. Call your response group together.
6. Edit.
7. Make that final copy the best ever!

I did very little during these times. My voice was no longer necessary.

As the final drafts were submitted, off they went to be typed by parents, students, and kind secretaries. Those who were not writing developed a list of pictures needed for illustrations; some drew them, while others sorted through ready-made pictures in my xerographic art packs. When the typed copy was finished, the students edited their copy one more time, and corrected mistakes with whiteout and black pen. Then a group of editors was selected to group the pieces, choose titles, and organize chapters. After the chapters were identified, others laid them out on graph paper. Fifty-six pages later, the finished copy was delivered to the district printers.

Boxes filled with 500 copies were returned during class. I pulled out a copy and flashed it; the students sat silently for a few seconds, and then erupted into a chorus of cheers. After scrapping the lesson plan for the day, we had a publishing party. The students read their stories to each other, they laughed together, they cried together, they celebrated together. Then I just watched and marveled as they asked their friends to autograph the pieces each had written.

We wrote a cover letter and presented our magazine as a gift to relatives, teachers, administrators, district board members, and other ESL classes in other districts. For many days after, students shared the compliments they received from teachers and students; they laughed that so many asked if the war stories were true, yet the students were grateful for the opportunity to share their experiences with their new friends.

My students finally understood that even though they were still learning the English language, their developing

voices were powerful and strong. Finally, they saw the evidence for the truth of the proverb our classes had adopted:

Life and love are like young rice;
Transplanted, they still grow.

My students, with their transplanted lives, hearts, and voices, had grown, and now they were helping others to grow.

This year began differently. This year my students asked, "How soon do we begin our magazine?" ■

(Reprinted with permission from The National Writing Project Newsletter, Volume 7, No. 2.)

A WRITING CYCLE APPROACH

"IT IS A MISTAKE TO SUPPOSE THAT INSTRUCTION IN GRAMMAR TRANSFERS READILY TO THE ACTUAL USES OF LANGUAGE. THIS MAY BE THE EXPLANATION FOR THE FACT THAT EXPERIMENTS OVER THE PAST FIFTY YEARS HAVE SHOWN NEGLIGIBLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF STUDENT WRITING AS A RESULT OF GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION."
(Becoming a Nation of Readers)

Many of us agree about the value of the process approach to writing, but we continue to teach writing within self-contained lessons providing insufficient opportunity for revision and editing. To correct this, we need to structure writing lessons so there is a linear cycle.

An ideal writing cycle may be one week. Introduce a subject, brainstorm, build vocabulary, and write a first draft on **Monday**. Whether students are writing journals, stories, poems, or essays, go directly from observational, reflective, fantasy, or other prewriting experiences to vocabulary building and brainstorming and then to writing on the first day.

On **Tuesday**, students can share their work with peers and do some revising. You may want to provide further food for thought as students share and revise their writings. In other words, if Winter is the theme, students should collect images of winter from magazines and make collages, bring in collections of winter objects, and make a log of changes that are related to winter. They should study what causes winter—at least question its cause—, and think of different ways animals adjust to winter, from thicker fur to flying south or hibernating. And most of all, they should take delight in winter.

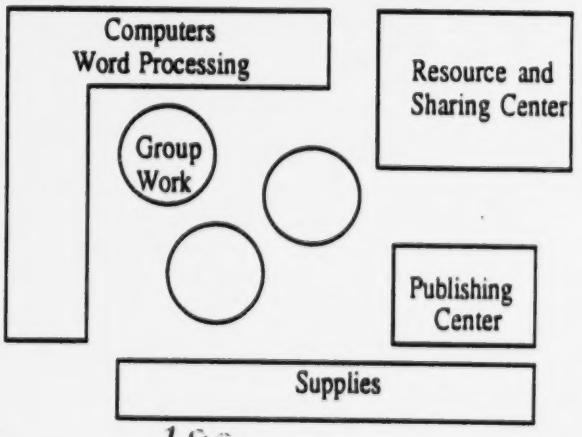
On **Wednesday**, have students take their work home to get parent and sibling reactions. When students take their writing home for the first time, you may wish to send an accompanying note explaining the social nature of language use and the importance of sharing for skills development: that writing skills improve when we share with others who are interested, appreciative, and polite, that this is not finished work but work in progress; and that sharing is a way of helping the writing to improve.

On **Thursday**, students make final revisions and begin illustration, which leaves **Friday** to be set aside for printing, binding, publishing, and sharing.

A 2- to 4-week cycle can be used, depending upon the depth of research, refinement of writing, and logistics of publishing. The main idea is that students see their writing, not as a 20-minute activity, but as a continuing process offering opportunities for refinement of thought and for sharing. ■

ORGANIZING A CREATIVE WRITING LAB FOR PUBLISHING

The following sketch shows the organization of the Winter Garden Writing Lab. Around the outside of two walls are the computers with word processing software. Tables for small group paper and pencil work are in the center of the room. Writing materials are stored on bookshelves on a third side. A sharing and resource area is on one side containing dictionaries, children's books, thesauruses, etc. Children gather here to share completed writing or works in progress at the end of the period. A publishing center with a printer, binding materials, and title and illustration materials is managed by an aide or volunteer. Students are very selective, choosing one out of every four or five of their projects for publishing and distribution to the class.



SHOW BUSINESS

Stephen Marcus

"Knowledge is know business, and in know business there's no business like show business."

Such is the observation of graphics consultant Aaron Marcus. Marcus is a computer graphics specialist, a designer of interfaces, and a leading "visual language hacker." His concern is with the face of the interface.

Computer-using English teachers have a natural concern for the *voice* of the interface, the words on the screen (or in the hardcopy). As it turns out, one of the most exciting developments in educationally useful software these days is software that enables students and teachers to *combine* text with graphics, allowing students to process images as well as words. Teachers and students can develop their sensibilities as "information artists," attending to screen (and page) layout, typography, color and illustration. **Dazzle Draw, Designer's Pencil, Mousepaint, MacPaint, Print Shop** and others provide a wide assortment of particular tools. Utility programs like **MacPublisher** and **The Newsroom** aid in the creation of newsletters and newspapers. And, programs like **StoryBook** encourage and enable students to illustrate and animate their stories.

It's no wonder that one-third of the hands-on sessions at a recent educational computing conference focused on image processing software.

What this all means is that the computer is providing a new and wonderful dimension to the phrase "language arts." Just as word processors enable students to practice writing, to see their ideas "in print," without the debilitating effects of struggling with their own or others' handwriting, image processors allow us to produce professional-looking documents, even though our "drawing skills" may be in a state of arrested development.

Even in the world of commercial word processing, industry professionals like Arielle Emmett and Esther Dyson note that standards are changing to include "not just bar charts, but organizational charts, fancy fonts, proportional spacing, heavy and interesting use of graphics. Typewriting and underlining won't cut it anymore." Fortunately, we in the language arts can take a little less prescriptive perspective. We can feel free to explore, invent and discover exciting ways to help students illustrate, arrange and publish their writing.

Combine a stationery-designing program like **Print Shop** with a photocopying machine using, perhaps, some fancy paper from a "paper-by-the-pound" display in a book or stationery store. There is extraordinary potential here for allowing younger students to create a personalized vanity press. In a more informal area, the ease with which individually designed and "grown-up-looking" greeting cards can be created can be a powerful aid in encouraging students to write for a real audience: grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles. The same can be said, of course, for the use of software that helps students write and illustrate stories. Writing and illustrating for publication makes the last stage of the composing process even more special. And with all these uses, it is particularly important, I think, to encourage students to develop their own design skills and not to depend solely on the teacher to create the materials. Students should be encouraged to discuss and recognize degrees of quality and effectiveness in the presentation of printed work.

There are, of course, problematic aspects of the computer-assisted combining of know business with show business. Some people worry that the use of ready-made

images will stifle creativity, or that the intimate relationship between the creator and the object created will be lost, with the computer somehow interrupting a natural flow from the person, through the hand and eye, to the paper. And there are some people, of course, who will use the kind of software mentioned above as a form of high-tech stencil. Every kid's cow or turkey will look like everyone else's. The computer will be enlisted to aid uniformity rather than diversity.

There is legitimate cause for concern. At the very least, there are no *definitive* criteria for well designed documents–even though some people transform trends and personal preferences into design dogma. At the other extreme, there are those who are not visually oriented to begin with and who can't help but wonder what all the fuss is about. Nevertheless, while there is valid cause for concern, there is even greater cause for optimism. The new tools offer opportunities for broadening definitions of computer literacy and for extending it to a wider audience, to those whose creative impulses are not cowed, but are intrigued, by the technology.

> ***"It is particularly important, I think, to encourage students to develop their own design skills and not to depend solely on the teacher to create the materials."***

Teachers have long practiced the posting of students' drawing and writing, as well as the sending home of their work. As in many other areas, computer assistance does not necessarily represent a new approach. What it does do is provide new powers and incentives. Unavoidably, in the short term, we'll be seeing lots of documents (papers, cards, fliers, newsletters, etc.) that need image as well as text editing. (As if things weren't bad enough, extraordinarily inept-*looking* memos are already becoming common.) In the long term, however, I think that more and more people will discover that word and image inform each other. Whether in as subtle a choice as type font or in the illuminating of manuscripts, the various dimensions of computer-assisted graphics expand and enrich the expressive repertoire of both students and teachers.

I can't resist: On with the show! ■

[Dr. Stephen Marcus, Associate Director, South Coast Writing Project, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106.]

9 Writing Across the Curriculum

"Students have become quite drawn in to the human dramas of their own creation. And the writing is essential to this new level of engagement with the material. No longer passive observers, students create their own learning."

Bill Bigelow and Linda Christiansen

Writing in Math Class? You Bet!

Here is a good way to encourage writing in math. These students participate in their own learning process by talking about difficulties they're having, directing questions or suggestions to the teacher or their classmates and by explaining concepts to other students.

The one thing I have been doing in math for the last seven years is making careless mistakes. Thats why I might get a bad grade on an easy test. I have been trying to work slower, hoping that would help stop my carelessness. Do you have any other suggestions?

Math is usually one of my better subjects. I really like the unit we are doing now. It is lots of fun. I am really getting tired of multiplication.

--an 11-year-old girl

I thought that this math class (advanced fractions) has gone really well. The math in some parts was easy (reciprocols and changing to common denominator) but in others it was challenging enough. I really like fractions. It's just something about them. I had a lot of fun in this class. I learned a lot and while I was learning I was having fun, too.

Math, in general, I usually like. The only thing that really frightens me, and usually drops my grade to a low, **low**, **low**, is surface area. I just **can't do it**! In all tests and stuff, I get D's and C's, sometimes F's. I just do stinky. So when that rolls around, do you think you can pick me up on it, Mrs. Askeland? In all other areas, though, I really like math.

--an 11-year-old girl

Student to Student--Speaking of Primes ....

So you want to know about primes, do you? Well, let's just only work on the primes between 1-12. A prime is a number in which no other numbers can be multiplied to make that number besides 1 and itself.

Here is the number 8. 8 is not prime. You know the factors of 8:

1, 2, 4

2 x 4 and 4 x 2
1 x 8 and 8 x 1

You see that 2 x 4 and 4 x 2 goes into 8.

But 11 is a prime number. No other factors besides 1 and 11 can make 11.

1 x 11 = 11
11 x 1 = 11

So you see that eleven is prime because only itself times 1 equals it.

--an 11-year-old boy

THE READING/WRITING CONNECTION

At a recent district workshop sponsored by the reading committee, teachers were shown how to teach paraphrasing as a way of developing reading comprehension skills.

There are three types of paraphrasing: simple word-for-word rephrasing, summarizing, and elaborating. These skills are quite different. In simple rephrasing, students simply substitute new words on a nearly one-to-one basis. If our sentence read, "Quickly and viciously the group of dogs devoured the zebra," it might be rephrased, "Rapidly and hungrily the pack of canines ate a zebra."

As you can see, such one-to-one rephrasing could send students to the thesaurus and help make them more aware of an author's vocabulary and style.

Summarizing or elaborating upon existing text are both higher level skills and help students become more aware of the organization of ideas, writing style, and content.

To get the most from paraphrasing activities, teachers probably will want to choose passages with important content or stylistic concepts. A good cooperative strategy is to have students rephrase with partners. They can also compare their versions with one another in small groups.

Summarizing has been shown to improve student comprehension. Verbal practice in which students identify key words, supply synonyms, and rephrase text helps get students going. Cooperative groupings also help students develop the skills and confidence necessary to write good summaries on their own. Such summaries can be systematically developed as a set of study notes in a particular content area.

Techniques that require students to respond to text have positive effects on memory, reading, and writing skills. Best results occur when they are used systematically throughout the year. These techniques are not merely skills to be taught. Rather, these are skills to be applied week after week.

Passages for students to rephrase can be stored on a data diskette and presented to students on a word processor or on printouts. The word processor would be ideal, since students could rephrase on screen. For the teacher, it would mean that a data base of model passages could be collected and used year after year.

Poetry can also be a way of summarizing student learning. After many weeks of discussing Halley's comet, for instance, first grade students were asked to list facts about the comet, which the teacher wrote on the board. The board was soon full! Next, the teacher explained the structure of an acrostic poem, and as a class they wrote this one on the board:

Halley's Comet

Hello Halley's comet
All of us
Like you
Look at us
Everyone is looking at you
You are lucky to be
S famous and so
Cutie Pie in such a big
Orbit
Moving around the
Earth
Traveling in space

by Mrs. Phelps 1st graders ■

Data Bases 'R Us

Stephen Marcus

My first work with computer-assisted writing, back in the early days, involved developing a program that helped students study and write poetry. I quickly learned to keep quiet about my work when talking with some people. They had a hard time accepting the notion that technology could be integrated into that particular curriculum. For many, it constituted "unnatural practices...unspeakable acts."

Times have changed. Now people routinely see computers as a "natural" resource for English teachers. Word processing remains the crucial technological tool for enriching the language arts curriculum, for providing students with new powers and incentives. And it's no wonder. Arthur C. Clarke has noted that "any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." Word processing, which allows students' words to be written in light instead of carved in stone, has worked its subtle but profound magic on many of us, changing our views of what writing entails, of what we can do as writers, and even who we are as writers.

There are other kinds of software now having a major impact on the English/language arts curriculum. Telecommunications, graphics, and interactive adventure writing software are all a part of any comprehensive integration of technology into the curriculum. Still another tool is data base software, something I myself had virtually no experience with at the time I was asked to develop some language arts applications for a popular data base program (Scholastic's PFS:File).

What I eventually discovered was that a data base provides a means of organizing, storing, and retrieving information. Your wallet is a data base. So is a dictionary. So is a novel. Each of these provides a way to organize, store, and retrieve information, whether the information is about you, about your language, or about an author's insights on life.

A computerized data base has its own special qualities, of course. If a word processing program can be thought of as a fancy typewriter, a data base program can be thought of as a fancy 3x5 card filing system. (Both these comparisons obscure as much as they reveal, but they do help make the strange familiar.)

Here's the basic data base jargon. Think in terms of creating a form (as in "fill out this form"). The terms are: FIELD, PAGE, FORM, FILE, RECORD. Figure 1 illustrates how these terms are used.

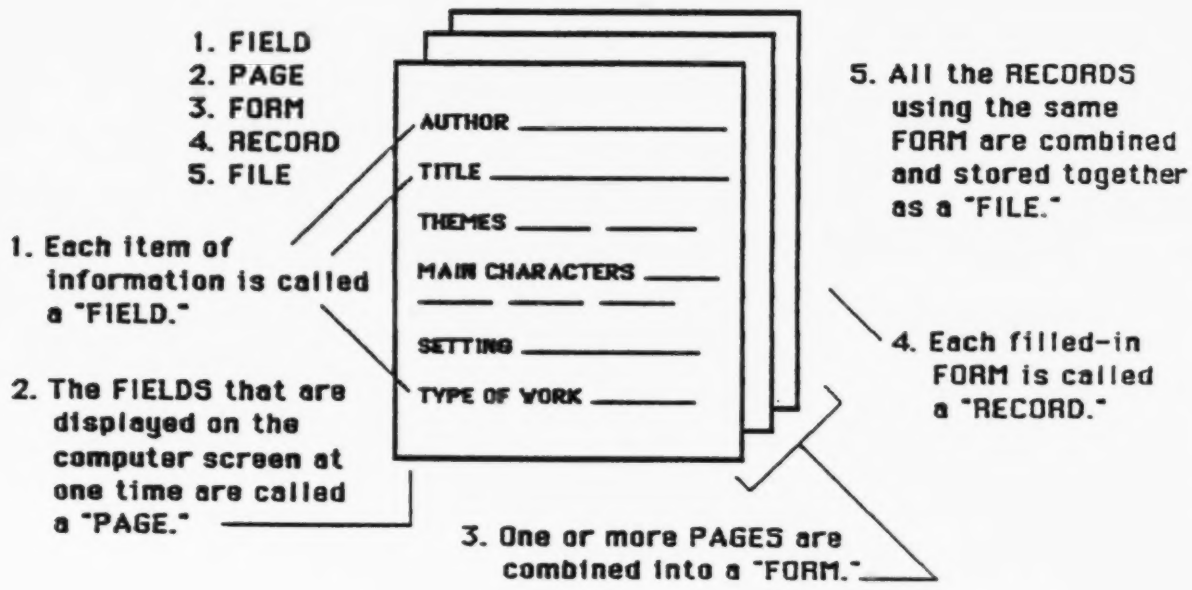

1. FIELD
2. PAGE
3. FORM
4. RECORD
5. FILE
AUTHOR
TITLE
THEMES
MAIN CHARACTERS
SETTING
TYPE OF WORK
1. Each item of information is called a "FIELD."
2. The FIELDS that are displayed on the computer screen at one time are called a "PAGE."
3. One or more PAGES are combined into a "FORM."
4. Each filled-in FORM is called a "RECORD."
5. All the RECORDS using the same FORM are combined and stored together as a "FILE."

Figure 1

That's basically it. There are other important things to learn, of course, but once you've gotten the terms down pat, you've made significant progress along the learning curve.

There are large data bases that are stored in central computers and are available to people with the right hardware, software, account number, and password. There are also disk-based data bases that are more under your control, ones you and your students can custom design and use whenever you want. In the latter case, what you do is figure out what kind of information in what area of knowledge you want to organize and store. You use a data base program (e.g., **PFS:File** or **Bank Street Filer**, the data base portion of **AppleWorks**) to design a computerized form that can be filled with the information you want.

The more ingenious your form, the more filled in it gets; and the more forms you fill in, the more you can "interrogate" the data base. That is, you can ask it questions and get answers that will be more or less interesting, depending on the nature of your questions and the basic structure of the form.

There is a growing availability of data bases for English and language arts. For example, in collaboration with Beverly Hunter, I created three data base curriculum units (**Literature and Composition Data Bases for Scholastic's PFS:File**, Scholastic, Inc., 1986). The one package contains AESOP, FICTION, and PAPERS. The AESOP file is based on Aesop's Fables (and includes 75 of them). FICTION is designed for studying any novel or short story. PAPERS is for students to record information about writing done in class. The discussion of FICTION, below, should give some idea of how data base software can be used to help students develop critical thinking and writing skills in English classes.

The FICTION form can be applied to any number of works, but to give students material to work with, FICTION comes supplied with 70 passages from two novels (*The Red Badge of Courage* and *Lord of the Flies*) and one short story ("The Lottery"). Each passage is contained on its own form, along with other information such as whether the passage develops a theme or helps reveal character. There's information about how the passage does this and about what people think about the passage. Some of the screen pages from the FICTION file are shown below:

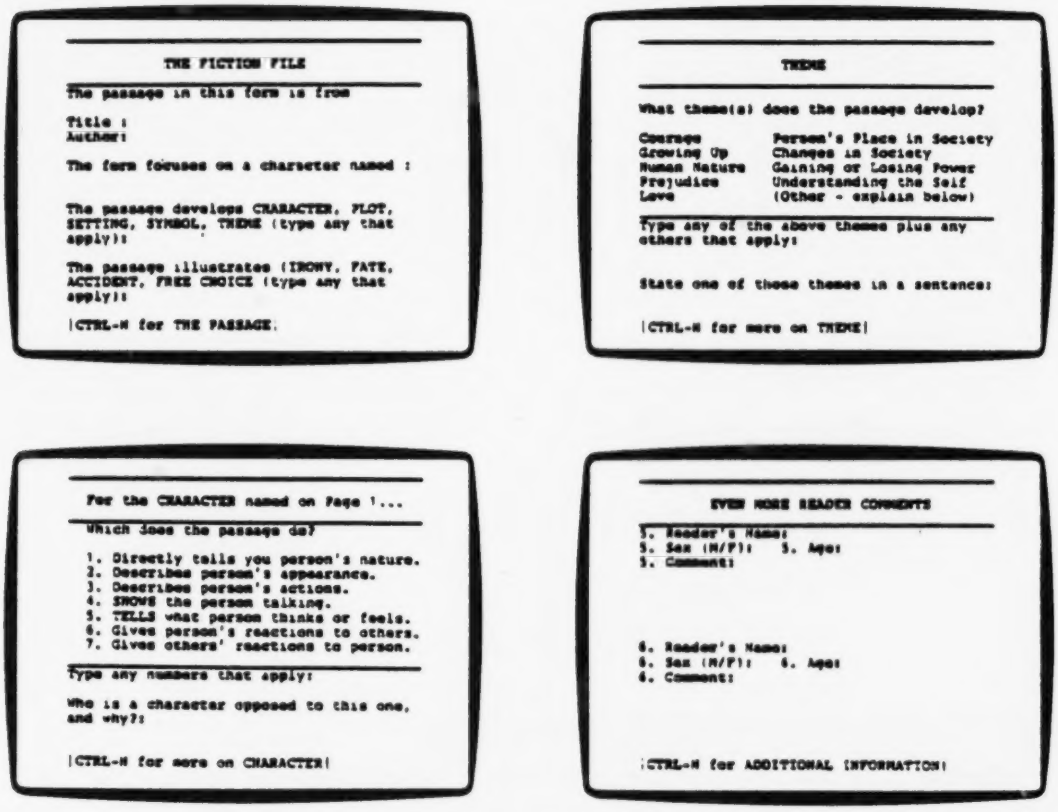

THE FICTION FILE
The passage in this form is from
Title :
Author:
The form focuses on a character named :
The passage develops CHARACTER, PLOT, SETTING, SYMBOL, THEME (type any that apply):
The passage illustrates (IRONY, FATE, ACCIDENT, FREE CHOICE (type any that apply):
|CTRL-N for THE PASSAGE.
THEME
What theme(s) does the passage develop?
Courage
Growing Up
Human Nature
Prejudice
Love
Person's Place in Society
Changes in Society
Gaining or Losing Power
Understanding the Self
(Other - explain below)
Type any of the above themes plus any others that apply:
State one of those themes in a sentence:
|CTRL-N for more on THEME|
For the CHARACTER named on Page 1...
Which does the passage do?
1. Directly tells you person's nature.
2. Describes person's appearance.
3. Describes person's actions.
4. SHOWS the person talking.
5. TELLS what person thinks or feels.
6. Gives person's reactions to others.
7. Gives others' reactions to person.
Type any numbers that apply:
Who is a character opposed to this one, and why?:
|CTRL-N for more on CHARACTER|
EVEN MORE READER COMMENTS
5. Reader's Name:
5. Sex (M/F): 5. Age:
5. Comment:
6. Reader's Name:
6. Sex (M/F): 6. Age:
6. Comment:
|CTRL-N for ADDITIONAL INFORMATION|

Figure 2

It's important to emphasize that while numerous forms contain filled-in fields (to serve as examples and working material), the real point of the FICTION file is to give your *students* the chance to read, think, discuss, and write about literature and to add their ideas to the FICTION data base. The Teacher's Guide contains activities to help students learn to use the data base program and to explore the nature of fiction in general and FICTION in particular. You and your students can fill in the forms (and add new ones) with passages and information about the same or different literary works.

As students add their responses to the FICTION file, the data base becomes richer. They can then use it to help answer questions like these:

- I'm writing a paper on the theme of "courage." Is courage in this story based more on what characters do or on what they feel?
- What part do rituals play in characters' lives?
- How does a character develop an understanding of himself or herself?
- Is there a difference between what boys in this class think about courage and what girls think?

Part of the educational goal with this material is to help students learn how to frame productive questions and to think about what kinds of information will help them answer their questions. As readers of literature, they're encouraged to pay careful attention to the text they're studying. As writers, "publishing" their thoughts and insights in the data base, they're provided with a tool to help themselves get "raw material" for class discussions and writing assignments.

It's also important to note that FICTION rarely supplies the actual answers to the questions. Instead, the students must apply such thinking skills as identifying and organizing information to solve a problem. They must also synthesize and evaluate that information in order to apply it to the particular writing assignments they're working on.

As noted, FICTION can be used with any novel or short story. Using the data base program itself (**PFS:File**), you and your students can redesign the form's structure to reflect other interests in the literature. You can also create a different version to use with drama or poetry. Your class could even prepare special collections of passages and comments on topics chosen by the students such as "Growing Up," "Leaving Home," or "Succeeding in Life."

Creating, enlarging, and maintaining a data base is a challenging and rewarding task. Many people, in fact, succumb to what is known as "data base fascination." The experience is like browsing through an electronic book shop. You can peek into other worlds and other people's responses to those worlds.

Every data base program has its own special strengths. **PFS:File**, for example, allows relatively large passages of text to be stored. Whatever program you use, you'll find that data base applications provide intriguing new opportunities for integrating technology into the English/language arts curriculum. Students can develop important research skills, become more computer literate, and enrich their study of literature. ■

NOTES

1. Here are some of the published data bases for the English/language arts curriculum.

- **Literature and Composition Data Bases** for Scholastic's **PFS:File**, Scholastic, Inc., 730 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.
- **Poetry and Mythology Data Bases** for Scholastic's **PFS:File**, Scholastic, Inc.

There are numerous other data bases for science, history, and social science classes published by companies such as Scholastic, Inc., and Sunburst Communications, 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570. Language arts teachers should have little trouble integrating reading and writing skills development into this material.

2. The thematic elements are drawn from the Model Curriculum Standards for English/Language Arts, California State Department of Education, 1985.

3. Portions of the article above are taken from the Teacher's Guide for **Literature and Composition Activities** for Scholastic's **PFS:File**, by Marcus and Hunter, New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1986 and are reprinted by permission.

FIVE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION STRATEGIES FOR LIMITED ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE DISABLED STUDENTS

Jon Madian

This article presents and connects five strategies for enhancing language acquisition. Since students with language disabilities and limited English students both struggle to acquire oral language, these strategies are relevant to both groups.

STRATEGY 1 - Total Physical Response (TPR)

If students give a total physical response (TPR) to whatever they are saying or singing, it is very helpful, since almost all learners benefit from kinesthetic and visual cues that depict the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence. Actors use TPR when they study and memorize their lines, taking on all relevant physical and emotional responses.

However, even if a teacher feels that TPR is worthwhile, it is hard to think of basic language patterns that lend themselves to physical responses. For example, it is difficult to give a total physical response to the idea that "I know how to write my name" without turning it into a game of charades.

STRATEGY 2 - Connecting TPR with Basic Language Patterns

The idea of basic language patterns refers to simple sentences or questions whose meanings are altered by changing one word. For example:

"I run to the store."

"I run to the house."

This basic pattern also can be made into a question.

"Where do you run to?"

"I run to the house."

"Do you run to the house?"

"Yes, I run to the house."

Foods and eating patterns lend themselves to TPR. For example:

"What do you eat?"

"I eat a hot dog."

"Do you eat a hot dog?"

"Yes, I eat a hot dog."

If you first decide with your students how they might gesture "I run to" or "I eat," then it will not be too difficult for them to figure out a gesture for "store," "house," or "hot dog." Indeed, this one bit of improvisation will provide some humor and unexpected inventiveness within a securely patterned structure.

STRATEGY 3 - Self Language

In *Dibs: In Search of Self*, Virginia Axeline demonstrates how she reflected Dibs' actions, feelings, and thoughts as he interacted in the play therapy setting. What is striking about this technique is that it is very similar to what a healthy two- or three-year-old child does when playing alone. A child named Owen playing alone in the sandbox might be overheard saying:

"Owen truck push sand.
Rmmmm! Rmmmm!
Push push. Owen push sand.
Owen dig hole. Dig. Dig."

Perhaps talking to oneself about oneself is the way the emergent language user practices language and develops the ego. I know who I am—"Owen" and what I'm doing—"Dig. Dig."

It seems desirable to structure learning situations in which students use self language. For example, if students are drawing, rather than drawing silently, have them whisper their name (or I) plus what they are doing:

"I take the blue crayon. I draw the sky. I draw a white cloud. I put the blue crayon back. I take a yellow crayon. I make the sun...."

Notice that each sentence is based on a simple, basic repeating pattern: "I take the ...." "I draw the ...." "I make the ...." And notice that TPR is built into every language expression as students narrate their own activities and monitor all of their actions with language. Consider how much language can go on during such an art lesson.

In order to begin this process with limited English students or students with language disabilities, you will need to model it. While students sit at their desks with crayons and paper, you have a large piece of paper and crayons that they can see. You begin: "I take a blue crayon." Then all the students imitate your action and words. Soon they'll be working independently generating original language patterns. For example, "I take a red crayon and draw the clown's hair and a red wagon."

STRATEGY 4 - Chant Poems

Many teachers have observed that the simple chant pattern works particularly well for oral and written language activities for students with language disabilities and limited English students. The chant, which begins by repeating one word three or more times, gets the process of language, the rhythm, and meaning started. Then the descriptive line follows naturally to amplify or complete the thought.

Perhaps your class is doing a circus unit and you have an elephant parade. As the elephants parade, they may chant:

March March March
The elephants march
Step Step Step
I march march march
Swing Swing Swing
I swing my mighty trunk
Slow Slow Slow
I swing my trunk slowly
Fast Fast Fast
I swing my trunk fast

Food and eating make good chant topics to connect TPR with basic language patterns:

Bite bite bite
I bite my hot dog
Chew chew chew
I chew it up
Sip sip sip
I sip my coke
Yum yum yum
It is good!

Notice that by saying the chant line, students are helped with the rhythm and inflection of the spoken sentence.

STRATEGY 5 - Seeing What We're Saying

Since language learning is auditory, kinesthetic, and visual, writing is another means to help students see what they are saying. Many students can learn to write and read while they are learning to speak, and others will find that written symbols help them grasp spoken language.

It is recommended that you write key words for activities on the board. For example, if you are coloring and doing self language, you may want to write the names of the colors and other key words or phrases. Talk about the initial sounds and rhymes that occur. It isn't that the students will be held accountable for knowing how to read. Rather, this is an easy way to help them begin to see speaking. It may help to foster students' interest in reading, and as they begin to recognize written language, they will want to create their own.

A word processor with a large monitor is very helpful in writing down basic spoken patterns. The clear, crisp letters written in light on the screen are easily recognized and manipulated. New ideas and patterns can be created, and students can monitor the process of expression. Everyone can read along as the words go up on the screen and are modified. A printout can be made for each student to illustrate and take home. ■

The WRITE ON! Special Education Collection from Humanities Software has several word processor data diskettes of prompted writing activities for most Apple II word processors. These diskettes, including CHANT CHANT CHANT, WORD FAMILY CHANTS, and PRIMARY LITERATURE COLLECTION, all utilize many of the concepts developed above. Teachers will find that the basic patterns developed on these diskettes are ideal to help the beginning language user learn to speak, read, and write easily and playfully. For more information write Humanities Software, P.O. Box 950, Hood River, Oregon 97031.

Are Simulations Worth Your Time?

Shirley Keran

. . . if teacher and student computer time is dominated by drills and tutorials, the market will respond with more drills and tutorials. Simulations are more costly to develop, to research, to design, to program, and to test, and they take more teacher and student time. Are they worth it?

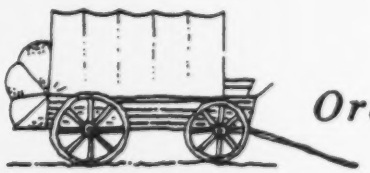
The Winter 1984-85 issue of CRLA contained an article by Elaine Jarchow entitled "Meeting the Computing Needs of Language Arts Teachers." Based on a survey of over 1,000 elementary and secondary teachers, Professor Jarchow concluded that "teachers found drill and practice and tutorial instructional modes more useful than simulation and problem-solving modes."

The conclusion is not surprising. Perhaps drills and tutorials are considered more useful simply because there are more of them from which to choose. By any estimate they outnumber all other instructional applications. Or perhaps it's because they require less teacher and student preparation and few, if any, resources apart from the hardware and software. In addition, it is possible that any task at the computer may be perceived as useful, particularly if performance results can be validated.

The intent of this article is not to dispute the use of drills and tutorials, but to point out that if teacher and student computer time is dominated by these uses, the market will respond with more drills and tutorials. Simulations and problem-solving programs are more costly to develop, to research, to design, to program, and to test. Without a market for them, certainly fewer of them will be produced. When one weighs the added cost of teacher and student time needed for these programs to be effective, the question becomes, Are they worth it?

Professor Jarchow says, "As teachers have more opportunities to explore programs in these modes (simulations and problem-solving programs), they may see more direct classroom applications."

My fear is that lack of time—which is sure to accompany discussion of what teachers ought or ought not to do—may preclude much experimentation. Outlined below are suggestions for direct classroom applications using a simulation and problem-solving program in order to spur teachers to say, Yes! The investment in student and teacher time may be costly, but the investment is worth it!



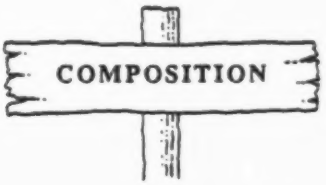
The Oregon Trail

The simulation I will use as an example, The **Oregon Trail** (MECC, 1985), is replete with applications for composition, literature, speech, grammar, drama, journalism, vocabulary, and spelling. This and other quality simulations can be the focal point of an interdisciplinary teaching unit that crosses language arts, social studies, art, and music. Although not covered here, there are also possibilities in mathematics and science.

The Oregon Trail, first released in 1975 by the Minnesota Educational Computing Corporation, is now remade, both in technical and instructional design. The new program has a complex reality-based model built on contemporary research and new interpretations of historical events, but it is easy to use. Full-screen graphics have an aesthetic dimension rare in computer programs and serve as "stopping places" along the trail.

The ideas that follow do not begin to exhaust the possibilities. In the interest of space, they are formulated as brief instructions to students.

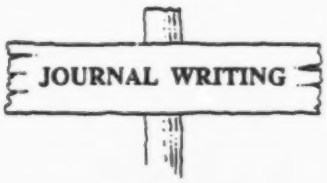
Using The Oregon Trail in Language Arts



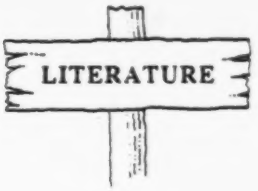
- Read an account or diary of an emigrant to Oregon in the 1840s. From your reading, in what ways does the computer simulation support or depart from the experience of your traveler?

- Write a character sketch based on one of the characters you meet along the trail in the simulation.

- Write a research paper on a specific question such as: Why would large groups of people leave their homes in the East to travel over 2,000 miles by covered wagon to an uncertain future in a strange place?



Record your simulated journey along the trail. Keep track of your provisions, who travels with you, and what you see and do. Record the number of miles between places and the names of places and people you meet along the way. Your journal may be strictly "factual" or you may "embroider" your account by placing in brackets [ ] details from diaries of actual travelers that you have read.



Read a pioneer diary, an interpretive history of life along the trail, or a book on the westward movement, and then run the computer simulation. From your reading and from your simulated trip, do one or more of the following activities:

- Write your own diary of events as you "lived" them.

- Summarize the history of a particular group who travelled during 1840 to 1860. For example, you might write about a particular wagon train of emigrants such as the Donner party or a party of Mormons, or focus on a Native American group such as the Kansa or Shosone, whose lands were crossed by overlanders.

- Describe the variety of animal life found along the historical trail—how did particular types prosper or decline?

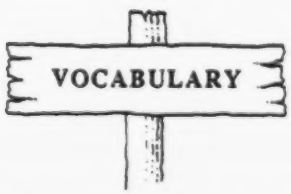
Choose one of the following topics and, as you run the computer simulation, take notes that will help you prepare a "first person" talk on your chosen topic about **The Oregon Trail:** Landmarks, The Conditions of Various Rivers, The Changing Climate, Hunting, Characters I Met, or Music I Heard Along the Trail.

Examine the monologues in the "Talk with People" option in **The Oregon Trail.** Some monologues are written in a formal style and others imitate spoken speech, suggesting the character of the speaker. Notice speech characteristics that may be different from your own. Try rewriting the monologues. Which grammatical and non-grammatical aspects give the monologues "flavor?"

Alone, or with another student, imagine what it would be like to be a child of 12 in the late 1840s—an emigrant child traveling to Oregon and an Indian child seeing many wagons cross grasslands and hunting grounds. Develop a scene with dialogue for two characters or stage a separate scene for each character. Next, pretend the characters are now 22 years old. Develop another scene or scenes to show how dramatically life changed in a 10-year period.

- You are a journalist for a Missouri newspaper in the early 1840s. Your assignment is to write an article to lure Easterners to head for Oregon by way of Independence, Missouri. What will you tell them? What might you leave out?

- Be a reporter in 1850 sent to Oregon by an Eastern newspaper in order to give a firsthand report of what it's like to travel to the West.



As you run the computer simulation, write down at least ten words that you cannot define precisely. Or, write 10 words that you may know, but which your classmates may not know. Check your definitions in a dictionary, and make the necessary corrections. Your words will be used to generate a master list on the blackboard or on the word processor of all the different words that students identified.

Here are some words from **The Oregon Trail** simulation written as they might be spelled, but aren't! Pronounce them, "translate" them into standard English, and then check your spellings in the dictionary and write down a definition or location for each.

me-ger grewling stren-you-us

wreck-comb-mend Chur-knee

Boy-zee Shy-Ann Paw-knee

Will-lamb-met Show-show-ni

Ki-use Kal-i-forn-ea

Crossing the Curriculum

Before discussing the question, Is the investment worth it?, consider: **a quality simulation can be used as the focal point for a broad-based curriculum unit that crosses disciplines.** Here are just a few examples of learner objectives and applications within specific subject areas:

SOCIAL STUDIES & LANGUAGE ARTS

Social Studies Objective: To develop awareness of decisions and their consequences.

Language Arts Objective: To predict outcomes.

Application: Before you run **The Oregon Trail**, decide whether you will a) load your wagon with as little as possible or b) provision your wagon with as much as you can before you leave. Write a short paragraph on what your decision is and why. Run the simulation. Write a paragraph telling the results of your decision and why you would or would not make the same decision again.

LANGUAGE ARTS & SOCIAL STUDIES

Language Arts Objective: To develop comprehension by identifying organizational patterns such as comparison and contrast.

Social Studies Objective: To compare things, ideas, events, and situations on the basis of similarities and differences.

Application: Run **The Oregon Trail** twice. Travel the first time as a banker and the second time as a farmer. Take notes on each trip—your preparations, stopping places and miles between, health, etc. Next, compare and contrast the two trips by examining your notes on what was the same and what was different about the two trips.

Social Studies Objective: To develop experience in cross-cultural situations by studying a community from the past.

Language Arts Objective: To speculate about the ideas, emotions, and issues of human life throughout recorded time by studying a group of people from the past.

Application: From your running of **The Oregon Trail**, your readings of emigrant diaries, and your study of the westward expansion between 1840 and 1860, give five reasons why people left their homes in the East to travel over 2,000 miles in a covered wagon. (Note: Once students understand the reasons for one mass movement, they can better understand another mass movement or exodus, and perhaps why so many persons today are refugees.)

ART

Objective: To be able to produce expressive visual images in response to specified subject matter.

Application: a) Choose one of the full-screen graphics in the program of a landmark (for example, Chimney Rock). Pretend you are standing near the summit of the rock. Illustrate the landscape you see below. (Note: This assignment requires that you research the geographic area surrounding the landmark.) b) Create a puppet from papier mache or wood to represent an Indian or emigrant man, woman, or child of the period 1840-1860. (Note: This assignment requires that you research a particular group of people and identify your creation by name and location, and that you explain characteristics of dress and background.)

MUSIC

Music Objective: To value the use of music with arts and other disciplines.

Art Objective: To know and understand cultural and historical context.

Application: After you run the simulation and succeed in making it to Oregon, imagine what you will do when you arrive. Develop a skit using puppets, music, and dialogue based on your idea of "Arrival in Oregon." (Note: There is no penalty for authenticity. You may incorporate historical research!)

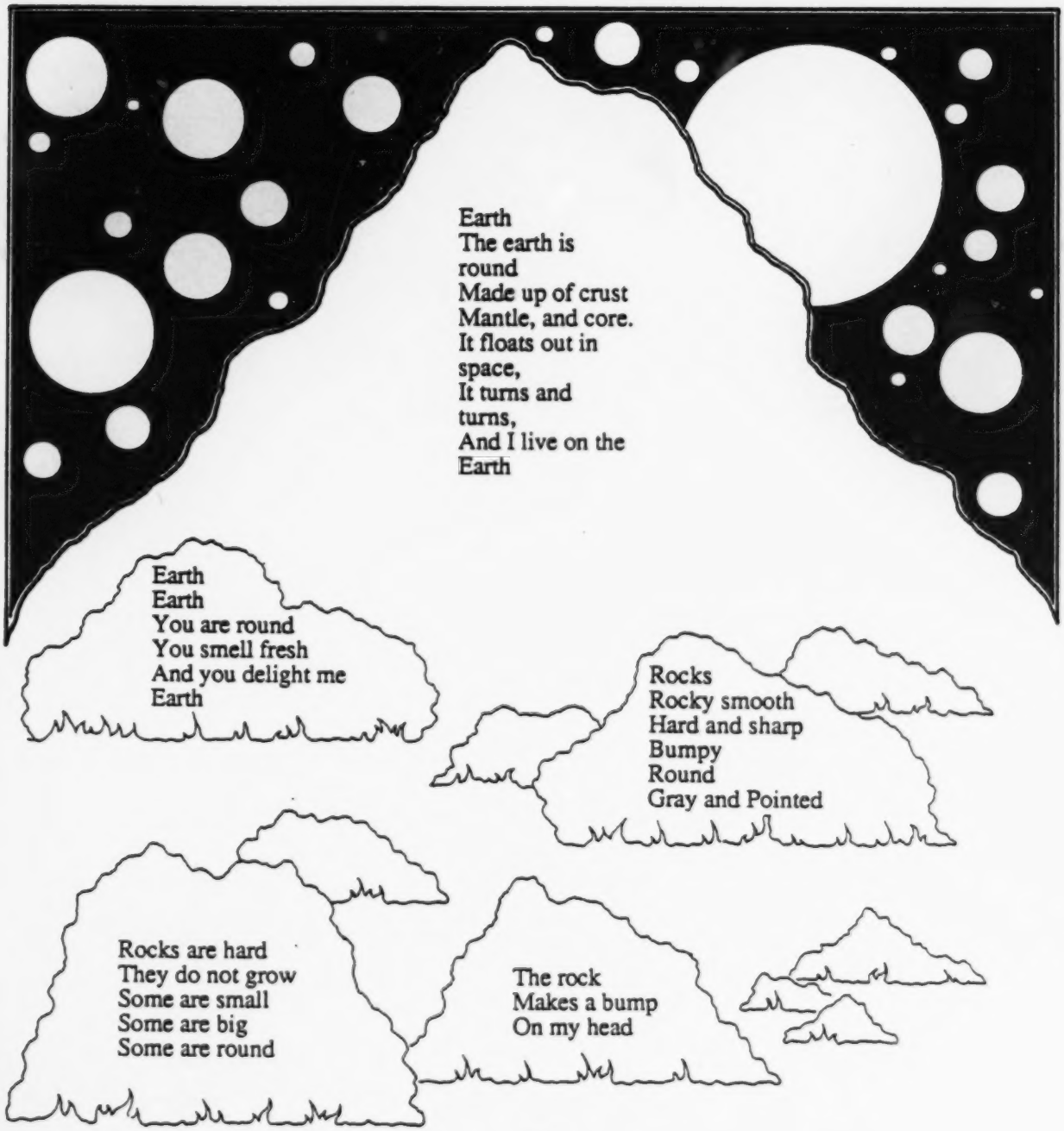
Is The Investment Worth It?

Without any assistance, a simulation may hold the interest of players young and old. However, it is this same level of intrinsic interest that can move a simulation beyond the enjoyment of the individual and into the shared learning experience of a classroom. Students can learn specific subject area skills while drawing on an authentic content. Moreover, class projects and discussions of issues of the past may evoke new understanding of the problems of today. Students who understand the reasons why so many people journeyed West in the mid-nineteenth century can discover the common elements behind any mass movement. And students who study a period in depth by exploring its history, culture, art, and music may come to a truer understanding of the interrelatedness of the past, present, and future. ■

(Shirley Keran, freelance writer and software designer, 3869 N. Victoria, St. Paul, MN 55126.)

Angry Clouds and Frighty Fears—
SCIENCE POEMS

Peach Spring School has a nice rock collection that makes the rounds. In Lucille Walker's 4th grade class, students studied the earth and the rocks. These poems were printed out, unsigned, one poem per page, in large ***Print Shop*** *letters:*



Earth
The earth is
round
Made up of crust
Mantle, and core.
It floats out in
space,
It turns and
turns,
And I live on the
Earth

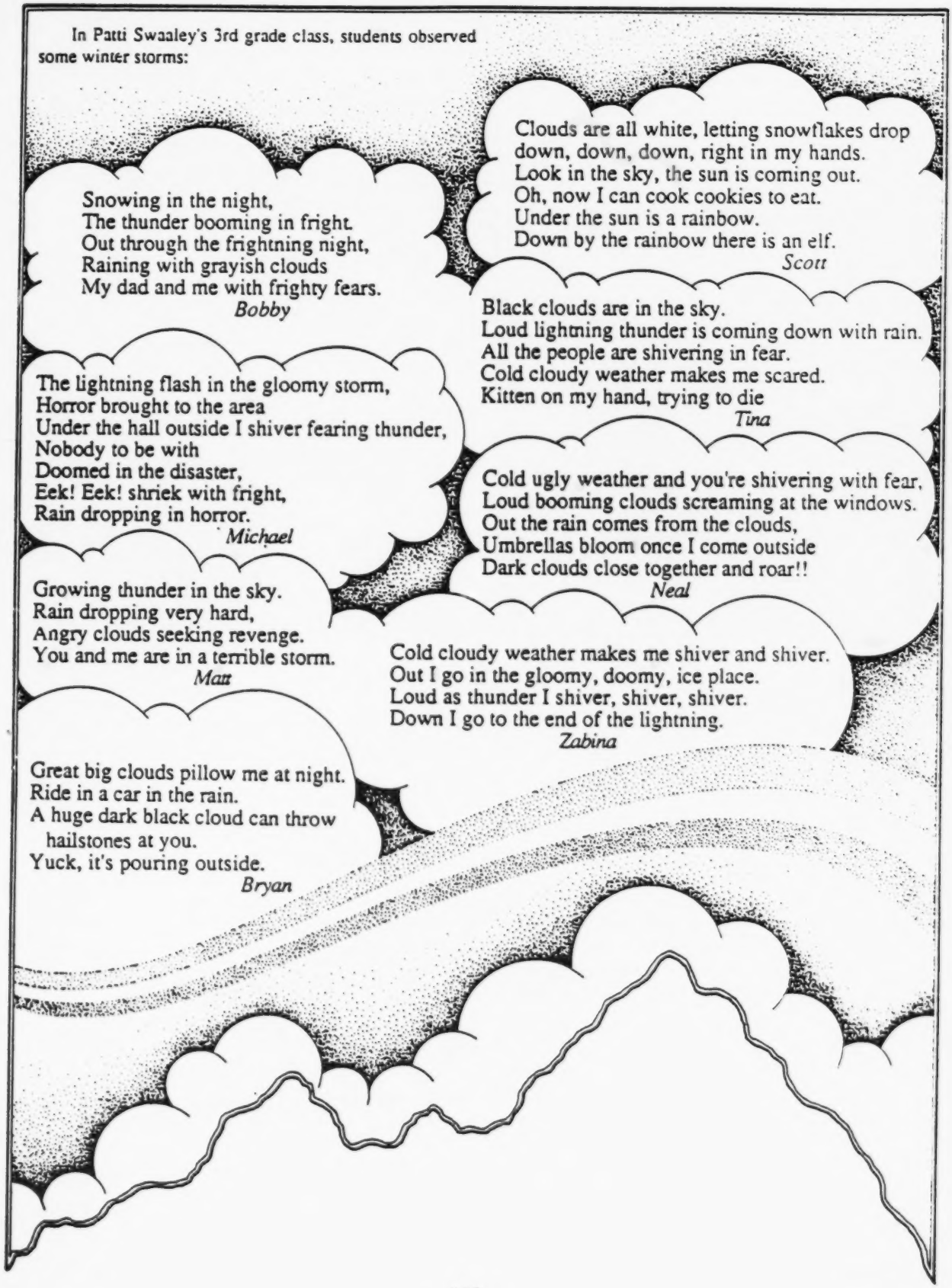
Earth
Earth
You are round
You smell fresh
And you delight me
Earth

Rocks
Rocky smooth
Hard and sharp
Bumpy
Round
Gray and Pointed

Rocks are hard
They do not grow
Some are small
Some are big
Some are round

The rock
Makes a bump
On my head

In Patti Swaaley's 3rd grade class, students observed some winter storms:



Snowing in the night,
The thunder booming in fright.
Out through the frightning night,
Raining with grayish clouds
My dad and me with frighty fears.
Bobby

Clouds are all white, letting snowflakes drop
down, down, down, right in my hands.
Look in the sky, the sun is coming out.
Oh, now I can cook cookies to eat.
Under the sun is a rainbow.
Down by the rainbow there is an elf.
Scott

Black clouds are in the sky.
Loud lightning thunder is coming down with rain.
All the people are shivering in fear.
Cold cloudy weather makes me scared.
Kitten on my hand, trying to die
Tina

The lightning flash in the gloomy storm,
Horror brought to the area
Under the hall outside I shiver fearing thunder,
Nobody to be with
Doomed in the disaster,
Eek! Eek! shriek with fright,
Rain dropping in horror.
Michael

Cold ugly weather and you're shivering with fear,
Loud booming clouds screaming at the windows.
Out the rain comes from the clouds,
Umbrellas bloom once I come outside
Dark clouds close together and roar!!
Neal

Growing thunder in the sky.
Rain dropping very hard,
Angry clouds seeking revenge.
You and me are in a terrible storm.
Matt

Cold cloudy weather makes me shiver and shiver.
Out I go in the gloomy, doomy, ice place.
Loud as thunder I shiver, shiver, shiver.
Down I go to the end of the lightning.
Zabina

Great big clouds pillow me at night.
Ride in a car in the rain.
A huge dark black cloud can throw
hailstones at you.
Yuck, it's pouring outside.
Bryan

Writing in the Media Center

Sharon Franklin

Libraries are a *great* place for kids to write! The library is a natural place to encourage the reading/writing connection, classroom teachers are usually eager to schedule additional student time in the library or in their classrooms to complete an activity if needed, and units can be planned jointly with teachers to support classroom areas of study in almost any curriculum area.

Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge
By Mem Fox; illustrated by Julie Vivas
Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 1985
P.O. Box 529, Brooklyn, NY 11231

One of the best ways to think of good writing activities in the library is to start with books that you love. **Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge** is just that sort of book. It's one that you will want to own, and one that you will be continually sharing with friends. The story is touching and beautifully told, and the soft watercolor illustrations carry great emotion and power. Although I suppose it is for "elementary-age" students, I always resist those judgments—this book has much to give people of any age.

Wilfrid is a small boy ("who wasn't very old either"). He lives next door to an old people's home, and he gets to know all the old people who live there. His best friend is Miss Nancy, to whom he tells all his secrets. When Wilfrid hears his parents talking about how sad it is that Miss Nancy has lost her memory, he is not certain what a memory is, but he sets out to find a memory for his friend.

After reading the story, let students talk about the book. What do they know about memories? Are there different kinds of memories? In what ways do we remember things? Can they think of a favorite memory? How can a person tell if they really remember something, or if someone has simply told them about it so often that it is familiar to them? (Does it matter??) What does it mean to "lose your memory?" Where do those lost memories go? Do students know anyone who has lost his or her memory like Miss Nancy?

This book is a great starting place for lots of writing about "Memories."

• Students can talk to their families and gather memories from them, or they can pick a memory of their own and write about it.

• Encourage each student to bring in a shoebox with three objects representing their own special memories in it. They can write about those objects.

• Fill a box with a number of objects of your choosing, and have students pick one of those objects and write about it as their "memory." Then have them choose one of the objects and write about it from the point of view of one of the old people in the story.

• They have probably discovered by now that there are all kinds of memories that evoke many different emotions. Have students take one of the objects from your box that they have written about. What emotion did it evoke? Now have them write about the same object, but ask them to create a new memory of the object that carries with it an entirely different emotion.

• Any of the writing ideas above will lend themselves easily to writing poetry. Students also will enjoy writing recipe poems for "How to Make a Memory." All their recipes can be illustrated, compiled into a "cookbook," and printed up for each student to take home.

• One exciting poetry assignment involves creating a box of "characters" representing different time periods, cultures, or backgrounds. Have students draw a card out of the box and write a poem that would reflect a memory of that person—for example, a young girl travelling across

the Oregon Trail in the 1800s; a young man just home from the war; a young person who has just arrived in the New World in the 1600s; a young Asian woman who has left her family in China to come here to study; a famous composer or inventor; or a young person who has spent the last year travelling around the country.

• Now take the idea one step further. How about the memory of a shell carried home by a small boy from the beach, a tiger brought to a zoo from the wild, flowers just picked for a bouquet, a child's first teddy bear, or a Navaho rug just purchased from an antique dealer? You may want to select certain people, animals, or objects that represent a specific social studies or science unit.

• The group might want to study memory from a scientific point of view as part of a science unit in their class. What recent discoveries have been made?

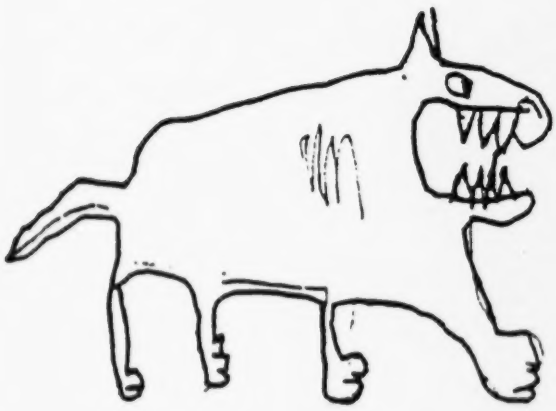
• A Class Memory Book is an especially good idea for 5th grade students who will be entering middle school next year. Students may choose to organize the book into chapters that will help them to record the events, projects, people, friends, and feelings they most want to remember about their last year in elementary school. They may want to ask other people such as their librarian, teacher, and principal to write something as well. Made into a book, it will become a real keepsake.

The idea that we are creating our own memories each day makes for a very rich discussion with students and is a good place to end the unit. What kind of memories do we want to have for this day?—for the end of the school year? —when we're "old?" Students can leave with the idea that they are going out to "make a memory"—make it a **WONDERFUL** one! ■

Sharon Franklin, in addition to editing TWN, is a former Media Specialist who happily still manages to continue her connection with children, books, and libraries!

Ga, ga, goo, goo,
The baby doesn't know the dog.
Bow, wow,
The dog is barking at the baby.
Ga, ga, wa, wa,
The baby is afraid.
Ruff, ruff,
The bulldog is scaring the little dog.
Ga, ga, doo, doo,
The baby says, "Hurray for the bulldog."
Gar, gar,
The bulldog says, "Don't mention it!"

by Aditya Prabhakar
1st Grade



Write to Think: Teaching about Social Conflict through Imaginative Writing

Bill Bigelow and Linda Christiansen

We wanted our students to know more than the facts and dates that comprise history; we wanted them to understand why people took the actions they did; we wanted them to experience vicariously the motives, desires, and frustrations people faced when they made historical decisions. We wanted our students to empathize with different cultures. And we wanted our students to understand that they themselves are the actors, the participants in today's society—the ones making daily decisions, the ones responsible for the history their children will learn.

But how? As a social studies teacher known for his role plays and as an English teacher known for her poetry and story assignments, our answer was imaginative writing—the writing of dialogues, short stories, letters, diaries, poems, and plays.

Initially, we felt apprehensive. While few argue that the essay is out of place in a social studies classroom, few see the necessity of "imaginative writing." Some English teachers even call it "fluff"—dealing with human feelings and emotion, rather than with factual data that can be compared, contrasted, analyzed, and more easily graded by objective criteria.

We were surprised by the impact this writing had on our students. When they wrote imaginatively using social studies materials, students began to appreciate the complexities of human behavior and to sort out the factors that contribute to why people think and act as they do. And this is what social studies is all about.

What I remember about your history class was becoming different people in history—like when I had to write a speech as a white Southerner who wanted to push the Cherokees off the land. I hated the Southerners' point of view, but after writing, I understood their motives and I understood how they became corrupted.

Anne Tillinghast
Grade 11

Our thanks to Linda Christiansen, co-author of Write to Think: Teaching about Social Conflict through Imaginative Writing, for sharing the Introduction from Write to Think.

The following are some examples of writing assignments we've given. Together they demonstrate the importance of imaginative writing as an integral part of any social studies unit.

Dialogues

A dialogue is a stripped-down short story: Students concentrate only on the thoughts of two individuals and aren't required to provide descriptions of setting or plot. But, as in short story assignments, students invent characters who assume lives and attitudes that may take on an independence from their creator.

One such assignment is part of a unit on the 1930s.[1] We provide a background reading depicting life for blacks and whites in rural Arkansas in 1935. Students learn that a union is being formed, but unlike many previous attempts at tenant farmer or sharecropper unions, this one will be integrated. Based on the reading, on students' knowledge of past organizing drives, and even of their own racial attitudes, the class brainstorms possible resistance of both whites and blacks to becoming members of the same union. For example, many white farmers will obviously have attitudes of superiority toward blacks and have difficulty admitting that in order to accomplish their own objectives they need blacks. For their part, blacks would have few reasons to trust whites. Many would have received harsh treatment at the hands of whites and would, with reason, anticipate the same from those in the union.

[1] From Norman Diamond and William Bigelow, The Power In Our Hands: A Curriculum on the History of Work and Workers in the United States (unpublished).

After thinking through these possible racial antagonisms, each student is assigned to write a dialogue between a black tenant farmer and a white tenant farmer. One farmer is an organizer, the other a skeptic who is doubtful that, given the history of tension and violence between blacks and whites, this move toward unionization has much chance of success. Students decide for themselves the race of the organizer and that of the skeptic.

As they write their dialogues, students climb inside two heads: one of an individual who doesn't believe whites and blacks can work together, and another of someone who believes they must. It's a history assignment and a writing assignment, but it's also much more. The issue of racism is a contemporary one, and the thinking process students have to go through in completing the assignment requires them to deal with questions that are not, unfortunately, limited to the past: Why are some people of one race reluctant to work with and trust individuals of another race? What experiences, what beliefs sustain those racist attitudes?

When students write as the union organizer, they confront this prejudice. They develop arguments explaining why people of different races should work together and what people can achieve in unity that they can't in isolation. Indeed, students may have to respond critically and intelligently to some of their own racial biases.

As each character responds to the other in the dialogue, students challenge themselves to come up with better and more thoughtful arguments—on both sides. Students go much further than a replay of already-received information. They probe the minds and feelings of their characters and the result is something wholly new.

Typically, and refreshingly, some students may reinterpret the assignment, as with Jeff, who chose to have his dialogue argued by two black workers. Here is an excerpt:

Tom: Frank, you ain't making no sense. Why should I join this union?

Frank: Tom, if you do, then other black brothers will join. Soon all the blacks would be in the union. Then and only then would we be able to control the planters instead of them controlling us.

Tom: Frank, this gun is all the control I need. I can do anything I want if I got this gun.

Frank: Can you keep your job with that gun? Can that gun help you out when you're starving? Can that gun keep your family together? Can you feed yourself with that gun? No. The gun you have there just keeps you from trusting folks enough to give them half a chance to help you.

Tom: Frank, I just see a bunch of white men wanting my five dollars. There ain't no white man going to go out of his way for a black man. Wasn't ever like that, never will be like that.

Tom eventually does join the union, but without conviction. Jeff acted out his dialogue with another student and helped lead a discussion of why Tom maintained his attitudes and whether Frank could have used other arguments in winning Tom to the union.

This assignment also allowed the class to learn what might have remained vague and theoretical had we just asserted it: that sometimes no amount of "right" arguments can change someone's thinking; frequently, attitudes can change only with new experiences. But what is important for us here is that this sophisticated thinking came alive for students because we engaged their imaginations as writers.

Diaries and Letters

Diaries and letters, like dialogues, allow students to view an event, historical time period, or culture as if they were part of it. The difference is that diaries and letters are more familiar forms and therefore easier for students to write. In diaries, students can imagine the anguish of an accused woman during the Salem witch trials, the fear and wonder of immigrants arriving at Ellis Island, or the outrage of Homestead steelworkers watching their comrades shot by hired thugs. Through these chronicles students come to understand why some women chose to die rather than lie, and why steelworkers met force with force.

While diaries record life's daily happenings and reflect the feelings associated with those happenings, letters allow students to explain an event to another person. One exercise that produced an insightful response called for students to assume the roles of Boston merchants in 1776 and to write letters to relatives in Great Britain explaining their reaction to the coming American Revolution. The letters not only captured some of the radical eloquence of the Declaration of Independence, they also revealed deep fears. Our merchants' messages home fretted that the raised expectations of the lower classes unleashed by the revolution could ultimately threaten property and social position.

In another assignment, students imagined they were American soldiers in Vietnam writing letters home. One of our students was so caught up in her letter that she chose to perform it for the class. Dressed in battle fatigues and carrying a tape recorder blaring the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil," she entered the darkened classroom, turned down the music, sat on the floor, and read a haunting letter to the little brother of a shell-shocked GI. It was certainly an experience for her and for the class that few other assignments would have produced. Such exercises bring students close enough to an event for them to imagine real people in real circumstances—to connect the characters and emotions with the words.

Short Stories

In our study of South Africa,[2] students are asked to write a story based on real-life situations encountered by people in that country. Before the lesson students have completed a number of activities, including role plays, films, and readings. Immediately preceding the assignment, students read one of a number of short stories or excerpts from various South African novels. We discuss the content of the stories with students, as well as the different literary techniques each uses to convey a particular idea or feeling. We draw students' attention, for example, to the writers' use of metaphors and similes, such as Alex La Guma's description of a white constable in *And A Threefold Cord:* "He was a short heavy man with thick, whitish eyebrows that writhed and wriggled when he spoke, like fat maggots curling and uncurling above his eyes, and he had a small thin mouth, like a bloodless stab wound."

Next we give students handouts that suggest story choices: A white woman tells her black servant that she'll have to send her new baby to the bantustans (barren tribal reserves) if she wants to keep her job. Or another: A black husband and wife live legally in Soweto, the sprawling African township outside Johannesburg. They have been asked by a friend in a bantustan if he can come live with them—illegally. We offer many other ideas and don't limit students to the suggestions on the handouts, but in our experience they feel more secure if provided lists of possible topics. Generally, the best work comes from students absorbed by the stories they write, who go beyond the initial task to create people who move us because they are struggling with their consciences or against an oppressive society.

This assignment generates a kind of thinking and a quality of thinking that a film, reading, or worksheet has difficulty matching. The story format urges students into the lives and minds of South Africans who then create a vivid fragment of South African social reality by recording that world on paper. While students may or may not sympathize or agree with the behavior of their characters, they will achieve much higher levels of understanding about why those characters think and behave as they do. The story persuades students to work with concepts they've learned about South Africa and fosters independent thinking by allowing students freedom to reflect on the facts and issues, to ask questions, and to explore possibilities without worrying about whether they are right or wrong.

As students search out details to make their stories believable, both they and the teacher become aware of gaps in their comprehension: Can whites go into black townships? Can a "colored" and an African get married? Are unions legal for blacks? And students learn by having to describe the South African landscape: What kind of weather would South Africa have in December? What type of terrain surrounds the city of Durban? At night, would there be any blacks on the streets of a white city in South Africa? The story becomes an evaluative tool for the teacher: What have students learned? Are there common misunderstandings within the class? Do caricatures recur frequently?

Some of the experiences we've had with this assignment remind us of the story of Flaubert finishing his novel *Madame Bovary*. As he completes his writing, he staggers down the stairs weeping and says, "I didn't know she was going to die." We may not have encountered any Flauberts yet, but through writing their stories our students have become quite drawn in to the human dramas of their own creation. Concepts and information covered earlier in the unit become more textured, more nuanced. One student, Ruth, didn't sympathize with the white middle class woman in her story who forced the black maid to send her baby to a desolate bantustan, but she learned a lot about why somebody would do a thing like that. David was hardly prepared for the challenge to his pacifist convictions posed by the African National Congress guerrillas he created in his story. And the writing is essential to this new level of engagement with the material. No longer passive observers in the classroom, students create their own learning.

The learning continues as students share their works with one another. One year, in a class of students with relatively low skills who were unaccustomed to sharing work with each other, every individual volunteered to read his or her story. Certainly part of this success can be attributed to students' feelings of repugnance at the racial injustices in South Africa and the compassion and outrage that situation calls forth. The story assignment allows for expression of those feelings. Students at a nearby high school were so delighted by their stories that they produced a book, *Stories From the Heart of South Africa.*

Poetry

"This isn't an English class, ya know," is not an infrequently heard refrain when we introduce poetry during a class on contemporary world problems. But students stop objecting as they become absorbed in the drama of the examples we share with them. Students quickly learn that poetry can be a personal statement of feeling and at the same time a commentary on society. In few words a poem distills a political/social reality into a clear, personal picture. As in other writing, poetry reflects and critiques reality—but it accomplishes this with more intimacy and economy.

---

[2] From William Bigelow, **Strangers In Their Own Country: A Curriculum Guide on South Africa**. Africa World Press, 1985.

In a unit we teach on Central America, we brought in Carolyn Forche's book, *The Country Between Us*, and read "Selective Service," a poem about the loss of friends in Vietnam. The students were silent after the reading. When they caught their breath, we asked, "How did the poem make you feel?" The answers varied, but James' response was typical: "I always thought about Vietnam as being in the past. I never thought that something like that could still happen to me." When we asked what in the poem sparked these reactions, they talked about Forche's image of our people "building their armies again, short years after body bags, after burnings."

As Forche's poem is addressed to today's students ("You were at that time learning fractions"), our assignment calls for students to write a poem to her in response. Before writing, we brainstorm questions they might have for this sensitive "survivor" of the Vietnam period and discuss their reactions to the implicit warnings in her poem.

In other units we encourage students to write poems toward the end of a period of study in order to personalize the experience. To help them get started, we sometimes read poetry by writers who were involved in the events and then use those poems as springboards for students' own writing. We also show slides or prints recalling some of the events we've been studying. As we present these, students are asked to compile a list of words and expressions that may help them reflect on the unit and provide ideas for poems.

The poetry assignment encourages students to ask "What did all this mean to me?" They create images that personalize understandings of a particular society, historical period, or conflict. Look at the following poem written by Joel, an 11th-grade student, in response to our unit on South Africa:

A Diamond

There was a woman
in a jewelry store
trying on diamond earrings.

She didn't know
that she was also
wearing crystallized tears
wept by thousands of
black miners.

Diamonds have an inner facet
not often talked about
by the salesmen at
Zales
or Tiffany's.

That facet is clouded
with thousands of people
choking and dying
from intense
heat
and dust.

Masses of black people
forced by poverty
to drain, chop, stab,
burn and suck
the land of its riches
until it becomes
nothing more than dead gravel.
Afterwards, as "superfluous appendages,"
they are forced to live on it.

Their crystallized tears
are bought by white people
who wear them
around their necks,
wrists and fingers
shamelessly advertising
the spilled blood
of the Zulu and Xhosa.

Joel chose the diamond to represent his sense of pain of South Africans, and through the juxtaposition of two worlds, our complicity in their suffering. Whatever the students' perspectives, the assignment allows them, if only briefly, to shake off what they were supposed to learn and to decide what they did learn.

We in the social studies are charged with a herculean task. We must help students learn the facts of history, of world cultures, of current events. That job alone is hard enough. But we need to help students make sense of those facts—to analyze, to interpret, even to judge. And finally, it's our job to convey a feeling for the real people who make and remake history daily.

Imaginative writing is an enormous aid in accomplishing these objectives, because it calls for a new level of intellectual and emotional involvement from our students. It helps us achieve our basic goal as educators: to develop student questioners and thinkers, participating actively in their own learning. Imaginative writing is an exciting alternative to the standard fare of expository writing. It can and should be an integral component in all social studies teaching. ■

[Linda Christiansen, 2814 NE Mason, Portland, OR 97211]

WRITING IN THE MIDDLE AND UPPER GRADES

Study Journals

If the poets-in-the-schools movement taught us how poetry can be used to motivate inspired, creative writing, the National Writing Project deserves equal credit for showing us how study journals motivate reflective prose.

The power of study journals is remarkable. By helping students to focus on their ideas and feelings, they become the center of their own learning process and more responsible for their own learning. Individual study journals enable students to become aware of how they feel about their learning experience and what they understand or don't understand about what they're studying. In fact, journals may be the best possible way to help students become aware of their own patterns of thinking and learning. Study journals are very flexible and are applicable to all areas of the curriculum.

After students read a chapter, hear a lecture, see a film, do an experiment, solve (or not solve) a math problem, or participate in a class discussion, have them write their reactions:

- What do they think about what they've read, heard, seen, or done?
- What do they agree or disagree with?
- What is new information?
- What ideas do they have about this information?
- What questions do they have?
- What further inquiry might answer these questions?

If students are learning to keep study journals, or for purposes of group review, you may want to model study journal writing on the board or, better yet, at a word processor with a large monitor. The word processor has several advantages over the board. It allows for cooperative writing in that students' ideas can be inserted or deleted easily, and everyone can receive a finished printout.

"The power of study journals is remarkable . . . and perhaps the best way to help students become aware of their own patterns of thinking and learning."

It is recommended that students write in their study journals at least once a day. There is probably no more efficient learning than when students confront their own thinking about the content they're trying to master.

Personal Journals

Adolescence is a subjective and fanciful age. Students at this age are mixed up in the intensity of personal discoveries as their biological and social status changes. At this age students need to be grounded in literary images that relate to their condition. They need to read about real and imaginary people who have travelled up and down the path that they are on.

For these reasons, having students read and write real and fictitious journals gives them the opportunity to reflect upon the feelings and forces that are so compelling in adolescence. Clearly, *Catcher in the Rye* is a great classic. While not a traditional fictitious journal, it is written in first person and contains all the passion and spontaneity of a personal journal.

There are many true and fictitious journals that are sensitive to adolescent themes. If T W N readers send in titles, we will create a list (data base) of references.

At the nonsubjective end, there are many journals (and letters) by writers, scientists, inventors, and statesmen that can be used as models for more mature, i.e., less self-obsessed, journal writing. These pieces have not been collected into a good reader yet, so building a unit around such journals requires some research. Perhaps **The Writing Notebook** could serve as a clearinghouse to let readers know about such materials. Please let us know what you've found!

Autobiography

Woodie Guthrie's autobiography, *Bound for Glory*, is a must for junior or senior high school students in the U.S. It tells the history of the Great Depression and World War II from the perspective of a unique, talented American minstrel as he travels across the country via boxcars and flatcars, singing his songs and discovering the squalor and the strength of the American people.

Woodie Guthrie's songs are classics of American poetry. "Like a tree standing by the water, I will not be moved." His autobiography is written with the power and simplicity of a great poet with little formal education. The film, based on the book, will provide students with vivid images and a heightened appreciation of Woodie Guthrie's story.

Letters

Writing letters for real purposes is an excellent way to involve students in writing. Letter writing makes students aware of their audience, and it requires them to revise and edit for "publication."

There are two main kinds of letters that are motivating for students and highly relevant for school: social letters and research letters. Social letters can be to friends, relatives, celebrities, or to others with whom a student would like to communicate. Many schools also have wonderful success with year-long pen pal exchanges. Obviously, word processing can facilitate the composing, revising, editing, and publishing of social letters.

Research letters can be of several kinds. Students can write to their relatives to learn about stories that were told to them when they were children, or to learn about their family's history. They can write to people working in particular fields to learn how they feel about their vocation, the preparation needed, or what they have learned from their work. They can also write letters to do original research for reports or articles they are writing.

If students are sending a similar letter to several people, they will appreciate the way that word processing allows them to write a first letter and then to rewrite it progressively as they evolve their thinking. They will also appreciate how a letter can be altered to fit a particular individual.

"Students can write to their relatives to learn about stories told to them when they were children. . . ."

Putting Plays on the Word Processor

Whether you and your students are writing original plays or using existing ones, you may want the play on a word processor. The advantage is that students can revise the play as they become more familiar with it. If a part written for one character now has two actors, for instance, the script can be adjusted. Or, if a character wants to change his or her speech, it can easily be done. Having the play on the word processor gives students an open, creative relationship with the script.

Write One Piece Well

Research and experience seem to agree that a person who writes several things poorly will continue to write poorly, but a person who takes one theme and writes it until it is "right" will write the next piece that much better. This is not surprising. So why do we continue to assign lots of little writing assignments, instead of assigning just one that students revise until it is very good?

In a previous issue we discussed a strategy that was used successfully at a community college as well as in a sixth grade classroom. In order to motivate students to generate a piece of writing they would want to revise, students were asked to write a poem based upon the pattern, "Once I was _____ now I am _____:

Once I was sad,
now I'm thoughtful

Once I was poor,
now I'm poorer

Once I wanted power,
now I want friends

After the students had written about ten of these that related to their own lives, they were asked to choose the one that was most important to them. Having made this choice, the students wrote an essay about why and how this change had occurred and the effect on them. They then met with a small group of their peers to read and discuss their essays. After their peers asked questions in order to gain a fuller understanding, the writer returned to the computer to add and to further clarify. This process went on for several weeks until students had explained successfully their transformation in writing.

At the end of this experience, students' writing skills, as well as their attitude toward writing, improved dramatically. ■

S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G IDEAS

Spelling Review With Phonics and Poetry

At all grade levels, the beginning of the year is a good time to review student spelling skills. You might consider various groups of words that students should be familiar with based upon phonetic patterns. At the primary level such words would include "at," "it," "ar," "on," "all" and "ow," to name a few.

Next you might focus on words that connect with lots of blends such as "im," which makes "shim," "slim," "trim," "skim," "prim" and "swim." Or you may prefer to focus on silent "e" word families: "ike, "ake" and "oke," and then perhaps on long vowels formed by the joining of two vowels as in "oa," "ay" and "ea."

Each day you might give students a different review spelling test that is merely a list of words from a particular family. Then teach the rule and ask students to write short poems using as many of the words from the list as possible. You'll quickly get a sense of where your students are in terms of their spelling skills, and at the same time you'll review and teach a lot of spelling.

One great benefit of this approach is that students learn a few hundred basic words right away. This builds their confidence in themselves as learners. For example, the day you play with "ay," students will learn many of the words below. If they are primary grade students, you may start with one syllable words. As they progress, two-syllable and compound words can be included.

This partial list of "ay" words should serve to indicate the richness of this approach:

bay, betray, Bombay, byway, clay, cutaway, day, decay, defray, delay, display, doomsday, doorway, dismay, field day, flay, fray, Friday, gangway, gay, gray, halfway, hay, headway, heyday, highway, holiday, horseplay, hurray, inlay, joy, may, midday, midway, mislay, outlay, out-of-the-way, out-stay, passage-way, play, pathway, pay, portray, pray, prepay, railway, ray, red-letter day, relay, runaway, runway, say, slay, soothsay, speedway, spillway, splay, spray, stay, stray, sway, tray, underpay, underway, waterway, waylay, workaday, X-ray, and yesterday.

Simple chant poems, free verse with lots of rhymes, or a story or dialogue using as many of these words as possible will be fun and will provide lots of spelling practice! ■

Creative Spelling

Current research and theory leads many writing teachers to feel that students shouldn't stop to worry about correct spelling while they're composing. On the other hand, we continue to hold students accountable for correct spelling and even give spelling tests. These spelling tests send students a message about correctness and doubtless cause many students to stop in the midst of composing to ask for spelling help or to get a dictionary.

One way to counter this is to have "Creative Spelling Tests" and "Creative Spelling Bees." In a Creative Spelling Test or Spelling Bee, students are asked to spell a word as many ways as phonetically possible. The more phonetically correct spellings by an individual or a team, the more points the individual or group receives / receeves / receaves / recieves / reaseaves....The team gets to double their score if they identify the correct spelling. ■

The Writing Family Project

Bruce Fleury

The family as a support system for children is changing. With increasing numbers of single parent families and working couples with children, a child's schoolwork can get lost among other very real concerns.

It's important that schools find ways to reinvolve parents in their children's school work. Here's one way.

In The Writing Family project, portable computers are used in school and at home to learn and practice writing skills and techniques. The portable computer provides powerful motivation for parents to participate enthusiastically in their child's writing at home.

Step 1

Students become experts at using the computer for writing at school. The Writing Family project in San Diego, CA, uses 13 Tandy Model 100 Lap Computers and 2 printers. The Model 100 is small (about the size of a telephone book), but it is a complete, single-unit, battery-powered system that includes a full-size keyboard, screen, built-in word processing software, and 24K memory, which is more than enough for this project. It can be purchased for less than $400.

Step 2

The parent comes to school and checks out a portable computer for overnight or for the weekend.

Step 3

At home the student is the expert at using the system and helps other family members learn to use the computer. Parents become involved in the writing and help their child with skills such as spelling, form, style, etc. Best of all, the family writes together!

Family writing activities usually consist of letters from the family to friends, relatives, or to the teacher, as well as creative writing such as stories and poems. (Letters to the teacher always indicate enthusiasm for the project and the increased involvement of parents in their child's schoolwork.)

The final draft of everything written by the family is automatically saved in the computer's battery-powered memory.

Step 4

The parent and child return the computer to school. An enthusiastic parent-teacher discussion about the writing experience usually occurs. (This informal parent-teacher contact is very much an additional advantage.)

Step 5

At school two copies of the family's writing are printed out—one for the teacher and one for the student to take home.

Families frequently choose to write about themselves. Brian, a third grader, wrote about his dog, Smokey. Here is part of Brian's story:

```
I have a dog. His name is Smokey. He is a big dog. When he stands up he is 6 feet tall. If he gets out of the yard he won't come back for a long time. We got him when he was a puppy. Now he is 3 years old. He is a brat now. He is a big puppy. He can't wait till his birthday next month. When his birthday comes up I will give him a bone. Smokey got out Saturday and got into a fight. After that Smokey got a rope on his leg. He did not like the rope on his leg. . . .
```

His mother also wrote:

```
Dear Mr. Fleury,
  This story was written by Brian Jones and edited by Mary Lynn Jones. We spent several hours working on this story. We enjoyed having the portable computer at home to work on. Thank you for the opportunity to share this project together.
                Sincerely,
                Mary Lynn
```

Another version of this article appeared in the October 1986 issue of ***The Computing Teacher.***

ELECTRONIC MAIL

Bernajean Porter

E-MAIL combines features of the post office, the telephone, and a bulletin board to send communication via the computer. The use of electronic mail in business, government, and for personal communication is growing rapidly. It represents reliable, quick, low cost communication.

The bulk of electronic mail is through messaging, a type of brief communication. Electronic mail traffic is estimated at 26 million items per day in the United States alone. Messages can be sent to individuals through a personal computer, a modem, some type of communication software, and a telephone line. It is stored in individual electronic "mail boxes" or posted to an electronic "bulletin board" for a group of people to browse through.

A similar kind of internal mail system can be set up in your classroom to simulate **E-MAIL** with one computer and a word processing program. With such a system, students will be able to send and receive messages on disk via the word processor. It will enhance writing instruction by:

1. **Encouraging written communication for specific audiences**
2. **Allowing different kinds of writing to occur (informing, entertaining, persuading)**
3. **Creating an environment in which students must write to communicate for real, immediate, and personal purposes**

FIRST, brainstorm a list of possible topics for mail messages with your students. See ideas included in this article. These topics can be added or deleted from your "**E-MAIL**" depending on classroom interests. Each topic will be represented by a file name on your word processing data disk. Students can also each have a private "mail box." Some word processors have passwords for privacy. Several files can be on one disk, depending on the anticipated size of the files. Or you may want to keep larger files on separate data disks.

SECOND, load your word processor into the computer. Create an appropriate introduction for each file by explaining the subject or purpose at the beginning. Design a "template" for the students to follow. Recording message numbers, topics, and dates will keep some order to the messages entered. The "template" can be left at the beginning of the file with instructions to retype, or use the COPY command so the template will not have to be typed in each time. SAVE the instructions and the sample template under a special file name. Post the file names for the class near the computer—you may want to create a bulletin board or activity center.

A SAMPLE TEMPLATE:

Message:
Topic:
To:
From:
Date:

A SAMPLE MESSAGE FOR FILE CALLED "FORUM":

Message: 12
Topic: Allowance
To: Judy, message 9
From: George
Date: February 12, 1986

You're right, Judy! Every kid needs some money to call their own—maybe you could list some ideas for your mom and dad on what you would do with the money—maybe save some, too—my parents liked that idea....good luck. Let me know if it worked.

NEXT, the students will RETRIEVE the file that interests them from the word processor data disk. Some of the files may be of general interest, some may be for special interest groups (SIG's) and some may be individual "mail boxes" for personal messages. After reading any

messages in a file, the student can choose to "jump" to the end of the file to leave his or her own message. When finished, the new version of the file is SAVED by the student.

FINALLY, some management will be necessary for success. Time limits may become necessary—using an hourglass of 15-20 minutes may help. Occasionally check the messages—the invisibility of electronic messages can generate many tricksters, some not so nice. You will want to plan for periodic "housekeeping," which includes new subjects, cleaning out old messages, and making hard copies or printouts of files for discussion purposes or for publishing.

Subject Ideas for Files

1. **STORY** — A community novel that continually grows by students' additions. The settings, plot, time frame, characters, and scenarios can be agreed upon with chapters assigned to writing teams. This can be completed and printed out. Start a new collaborative novel monthly.

2. **RIDDLE** — Collections of jokes, anecdotes, or riddles. You might want to make this topical like "knock-knock" or "elephant" jokes, or "computer puns." Answers might be stored under a different file name.

3. **CLUBS** — Messages for students in specific clubs.

4. **REVIEWS** — Book, movie, or TV reviews. Students can use the FIND command to locate a specific review.

5. **ASK IT** — A question-and-answer discussion—either Trivia or Advice. Students might ask "Where can I find...?" "Who won the 1965 Superbowl?" "How do you make playdough? "How can I earn money this summer?"

6. **FOR SALE** — Information about good deals or swaps.

7. **ASSIGNMENTS** — Teachers can have a student record each day's assignments, so that students who are absent can get make-up assignments when they return. Use FIND for the dates they missed.

8. **CREATE** — Students can leave and share poems, short stories, or thoughts. You may want to get hard copies periodically for publication.

9. **START-UPS** — Collection of ideas for writing assignments. It might be brainstormings or first liners or topic ideas. These could be specialized file names that relate to class assignments.

10. **FORUM** — Discussion of an issue that holds student or school-related interest. Should students have allowances? What is computer crime? How can we earn extra money? Create a PRO file and a CON file. Print out the files to use for class discussions or expository writings.

11. **CONFIDENTIAL** — Students can describe a personal problem and ask other students to respond. Students reading the problems can respond with various points of view and brainstorm on different ways of dealing with that problem.

12. **STUDENT** — Have each student create his or her own file with a computer name (be sure to have them write their names down on a piece of paper that will stay with the teacher). Students can even have passwords for privacy with some word processors. Students can then send and receive messages by accessing their "mail box" file name. This can replace the note-passing activity that can sometimes be a nuisance in a classroom. One problem that will have to be addressed is the ethics of privacy—this is a real world problem of accessing electronic information or areas that are restricted. The ethics of invasion in electronic sharing will need discussing and monitoring.

13. **PEN PALS** — Many of these topics can easily be expanded to a pen pal activity with another class at the same school or long distance by exchanging floppy disks with other schools if both groups are using the same word processor. ■

(Bernajean Porter, Senior Educational Technology Coordinator, Colorado Department of Education, 201 E. Colfax, Denver, CO 80203.)

10 Timely Writing Ideas

"When you ask me how I feel, I'm the only one who can tell you! And I like that!"

Kindergarten student

Timely Writing Ideas

Writing activities that correspond to seasons, weather, holidays, and significant events are a fun and motivating way to encourage many different kinds of writing in students at all grade levels. **The Writing Notebook** has suggested many such activities—just a representative few are included in this anthology.

One superb source that will provide you with information about famous events, inventions, and "other things to do every day of the year" is **The Kids' Diary of 365 Amazing Days** by Randy Harelson (Workman Publishing, 1979, $8.95). Although designed as a diary/workbook, with space for kids to write in directly, the ideas provide a rich springboard from which to create your own daily writing activities. Here are some to get you started.

Primary Level Journals

Begin journal writing the first day. At the primary level you can start with simple group journals in which students describe what they have experienced throughout the day. In the morning the journal may focus on the weather outside, what students had for breakfast, what they wore, how they travelled to school, and how they felt. At the end of the day, the journal might summarize the day's events and "what we learned."

Using a word processor for group writing in primary grades works beautifully. It enables students to see their thoughts changing into words and it allows for easy revision. Here is a sample form from **Write On! Data Diskettes** from Humanities Software. Any part of this form can be written over on the word processor, so you and your students can fill in the blanks and you can change the prompts.

It is _____ in the morning (afternoon).
The weather is _____.
There are _____ students in our class today.
_____ are girls; _____ are boys.
We are in the _____ grade.
In our room we have pictures of _____.
At recess we _____.
For breakfast (lunch) we ate _____.
Today we learned _____.
Tomorrow we will _____.

Seasonal Chant Poems

Have students write chant poems about summer, fall, or the change from one season to the other.

summer summer summer
sunshine glimmers
clothes are thinner

summer summer summer
sun splashing in bubbles
you forget your troubles

fall fall fall
golden leaves start to fall

fall fall fall
I sit in school
and write about summer

A C R O S T I C

The acrostic form provides an ideal structure for writing as students are getting to know each other. They can write name acrostics using the letters in their names as the initial letters for each line:

J oe likes to jump
O ften he jumps too high
E nding up floating on a sigh

Or they can write name chant poems:

Joe Joe Joe
Joe sounds like slow
Joe Joe Joe
Joe likes to go
Almost sounds like an echo-o-o

Art and Poetry

The beginning of the year is ideal for students to create collages on manila folders to serve as creative writing folders. Once students have created their collages—or even mobiles—have them create poems that capture the themes, motions, colors, and moods that they chose to represent. Simile or metaphor poems work well:

I'm a surfer racing before a wave
I'm like a colorful parrot who talks just for fun
I'm a black Porsche that roars at top speed
I'm an eagle watching the world below
I'm a baby who just fell on his gushy diapers
I'm like a squirrel hiding seeds for winter

Halloween and Columbus Day

Many kinds of poetry work well to capture the spirit and images of Halloween and Columbus Day. You may want to brainstorm vocabulary and write a few class poems on the board. Students can then write individually or in cooperative groups. Chants and acrostics work particularly well, but simile, metaphor, Haiku, and blank verse poems can also be used.

Columbus' life of perseverance lends itself well to the chant form. Begin by brainstorming key words, and then determine which words make good chant lines. Circle these and either write a group poem or simply see what students can do. Here are a few lines that show what may result:

Flat flat flat
People said the world was flat
Round round round
Columbus heard a different sound
Ask ask ask
Columbus asked Queen Isabella for sailing ships
Wait wait wait....

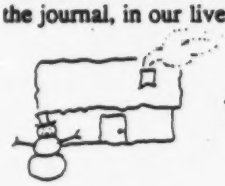
After waiting, he sails sails sails across the ocean; bobs bobs bobs for days; looks looks looks for land; while his crew grumbles grumbles grumbles about mutiny; land ahoy land ahoy land ahoy; search search search for gold to hold hold hold (or to put into his hold); and he grows old old old and sad sad sad and probably mad mad mad.

Journal Writing for High School Students

The personal journal has many virtues for developing writing skills and sensitivity. An excellent journal for high school students is May Sarton's *Journal of a Solitude*. This journal is appropriate for several reasons. For one, it begins on September 15, about when school begins and proceeds through one whole year.

"September 15. Begin here. It is raining. I look out on the maple, where a few leaves have turned yellow, and listen to Punch, the parrot, talking to himself and to the rain ticking gently against the windows. I am here alone for the first time in weeks, to take up my "real" life again at last. That is what is strange—friends, even passionate love, are not my real life unless there is time alone in which to explore and to discover what is happening or has happened. Without the interruptions, nourishing and maddening, this life would become arid. Yet I taste it fully only when I am alone here and the house and I resume old conversations."

This is also a fine journal to share with high school students because it focuses on the individual's struggle to find beauty and meaning in solitude. Although the words are those of a 60-year-old writer, she struggles with the universal issues of finding beauty, living through despair and creating meaning, and she does so with simple eloquence that makes us as readers more aware, both of ourselves and of the importance of literature, particularly the journal, in our lives.



Winter Poems for Primary Students

Thanksgiving and winter holidays provide a wealth of writing experiences for primary grade students. The chant form gives beginning readers and writers a wonderful sense of independence. Students will want to continue writing after the lesson is over, they'll write poems at home, students who have never written before will write, and ESL students will write in English for the first time using this pattern. Here are some patterns and subjects for the winter season:

Cold, cold, cold
The wind blows on my nose
Cold, cold, cold
The icicles sparkle
Cold, cold, cold
I'm cold when I make a snowman

The emphasis here is upon a simple chant line that repeats three times. Each chant line repeats three times (more or less) and is interspersed with simple descriptive lines that may or may not begin with an "I" statement. Rhyme is avoided so students will seek real experiences to report rather than relying on silly rhymes.

Here are some other chant lines that can be repeated three or four times to form a chant poem: jingle, jingle, jingle; gobble, gobble, gobble; sledding, sledding, sledding (or slide, slide, slide); icicle, icicle, icicle; snow, snow, snow; ice, ice, ice; sparkle, sparkle, sparkle; thanks, thanks, thanks.

An alternative to using only one chant line throughout the poem is to encourage students to create new chant lines. Then instead of having "cold" on every line, students might write a poem like this:

Cold, cold, cold
Brrr, I'm freezing
Brrr, brrr, brrr
I'm too cold
Warm, warm, warm
I want hot chocolate now!

Second graders can also work with simple acrostic themes; however, they probably won't have the independent success with acrostics that they will have with chants, so you may need to write these as a class or in small groups.

Short vivid words like ice, snow, jungle, thanks, ribbons, sing, give, play, and love work best for acrostic and chant poems. In fact, it is a good idea to first have students write a chant using one of these words and then have them choose a chant word and write an acrostic poem.

Winter Poems for Third Grade through College Students

The chant and acrostic forms are challenging and fun at all grade levels. At third grade and beyond, you may sometimes want to encourage students to play with rhyme, while encouraging them to find as much meaning as possible. Though you'll see a lot of silly rhymes, your students will tell you that they are delighting in writing, even if what they are writing is less than inspiring to the adult ear. Another benefit of such rhyme play is that students sharpen their spelling and phonetic skills.

November 29 • Louisa May Alcott Day
November 30 • Mark Twain Day

In honor of Louisa May Alcott and Mark Twain, you might want to read excerpts from works by each of these writers. Here's a riddle from *Amazing Days*:

Q: How is it possible that Mark Twain was born in both Florida and Missouri?

A: He was born in Florida, (a city in) Missouri!

Discuss pen names. Why did many creative people use pen names? Who are some other famous people who used pen names? Let your students create their own pen names.

December 15 • Bill of Rights Day

The first ten amendments to the Constitution were ratified in 1791. The importance of guaranteeing each of these freedoms is of the greatest significance. This date can spawn discussion and essays on the importance of freedom of thought and speech, and on the relationship between the individual and the state.

January 3, 1888 • Wax Paper Drinking Straws Invented

What better time to have students reveal their own inventive ideas? Have them diagram and write descriptions.

January 15 • Martin Luther King Day

Consider the lives of the many martyrs who have died to make the world a better place. Discuss the nature of moral courage. Look at videos of Martin Luther King, Jr. at work, and read or listen to a tape of some of his speeches. Have students write their thoughts on the Black struggle for freedom and equality. Who are people living today who are engaged in a courageous struggle to win freedom for groups of people?

Recipes for All Occasions

Recipe poems can be written on every imaginable topic. You can write a recipe for love, friendship, good grades, bad grades, revolution, insight, arguments, a nice day, solving math problems, writing a poem, a winning team, a smile, or the weather.

Begin by brainstorming words associated with your topic. For example, in order to write a Recipe for Weather, we might begin by listing "weather words." You can use a brainstorming tree or simply list the words, leaving room to write other words nearby as they come to mind.

Brainstorming Tree

Note that rhyming words are paired with weather words wherever possible. You may also want to include other sound-related words. Once you have a good list of words, you may want to list recipe words. If your students have been reading and sharing favorite recipes, and perhaps recording some of their family's favorites by interviewing grandparents and other family members, then they'll be familiar with the key vocabulary for recipes. Your list of recipe words will probably look similar to this:

break	add	stir	mix	fold
separate	beat	fry	heat	boil
broil	melt	dissolve	sift	cool
wash	drain	sprinkle	pour	cook
cream	bake	simmer	dredge	spoon
ooze	poach			

Here is a recipe poem from the "Poetry for Young Poets" disk, part of the Humanities Software Write On! collection (P.O. Box 590727, San Francisco, CA 94159).

A Recipe for Weather

Begin with a large blue bowl
Take a sprinkle of yellow sun
Cover with dark clouds
Add swirling wind
Pour falling rain
Stir in loud crashing thunder
Mix together with a feather
And you've made a day of winter weather

February 1 • National Freedom Day

Here is a perfect topic for social studies, history, values clarification, and writing, writing, writing. Students might discuss how much freedom people their age should have. Do they have enough freedom (or too much) at home? in school? Why is it important for people to have freedom? Some people say that while we have political and economic freedom in America, and even the opportunity to speak, worship, and behave as we wish, that in fact people in America are mostly free to buy things they are told to buy on television. Is there real freedom in a consumer society?

You may want to review the history of the Magna Carta, Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights. Consider the lives and works of John Stuart Mill, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Harriet Tubman, Crazy Horse, Martin Luther King, Jr., Susan B. Anthony, Helen Keller, A.S. Neill, Isadora Duncan, John Muir, and Gandhi. Who else can you and your students think of who lived, worked, and died for freedom?

Recipe for Freedom

Grow a stout and independent heart
Mix in a little anarchy,
a cup of gentleness,
and a pound of courage
Warm a smile for life's heartaches
Boil anger at injustice
Stir patiently all misunderstandings
Hold gently the dark winds of fear
Work devoutly to bring love near

February 14 • Valentines Day

Learn the story of how Valentines Day came to be. Write a Recipe for LOVE, LOVE is Like..., a LOVE acrostic, or LOVE chant. Tell your students the delightful story, "Mr. Murdle's Large Heart" from a collection of stories titled *A Street of Little Shops* by Margery Bianco. It is now out of print, but your public library may have a copy. Students will enjoy writing their own descriptions of Mr. Murdle's store.

Spring

Spring is upon us with an avalanche of color and BIG WEATHER (as my grandmother used to say)! Winter is past, and the sky fills with billowy clouds. The weather changes dramatically—in some places from sun to wind to hail to sun again—in the same day! In some ways it's like fall—cold and brisk, full of freshness, sunny but often blustery. Have your students write a comparison between spring and fall, perhaps poems one day, essays the next, and persuasive arguments on another day.

Our Mittens Lift

Fall and spring flow opposite
from warm to cold, then back again
from solid ice to gushing creeks
and our mittens lift
toward our chilled cheeks

A warm sunrise sings rings of color
circles of green
on sprouting bushes and trees
in light bright fields
baby sheep
cry on knobby knees
12th grade student

TRANSFORMATION

Ice melts into black rivers
Cold glows into warm
Heavy coats lighten into sweaters
Hot stews cool into salads
Skiing slides into baseball

HAIKU

Where snow once perched
Yellow bird twills a spring song
I stop to listen

Story Writing

Have your students write a story set in spring—perhaps an animal, sports, or mystery story. Explain that they must include elements of spring in their descriptions of the setting, as well as including spring in the actions, dress, or mood of the characters. For an extra challenge, have them try to include spring in the plot.

Personal Journal Writing

Discuss with your students how a spring day might be a metaphor or a symbol for an event in their own lives. Then ask them to write in their journals a description of some aspect of the season. How does an image of spring fit as a symbol of an event, feeling, or theme in their life?

Publish Anthologies

The end of school is a good time to involve students in some culminating events. Suggest that students might publish individual and class collections of poems, stories, editorials, journals, and whatever else they feel is of value.

May 9 • Peter Pan Day

Sir James M. Barrie, author of Peter Pan, was born on this date in 1860. After reviewing the events in the story, have students select one of the objects or animals from Peter Pan and write from its point of view. They might choose the pocket watch, alligator, gangplank, Nana, the trees, or Captain Hook's hat. Let students share their writings with the class and publish them, perhaps as part of a "Celebrating Peter Pan" mural.

May 10 • Mother's Day

The first Mother's Day was on this date in 1908. Students may want to do an acrostic poem for their mother, grandmother, or other special mother figure in their life.

M ostly takes time to listen
A lways ready for fun
R arely does she yell at me
Y es, my mom's the very best one!

You might also want to take this opportunity to think about the image of Earth as Mother. Students may enjoy making a card for this special mother, and in designing a gift or a celebration especially for her.

May 28 • Sierra Club Founded (1892)

The Sierra Club is dedicated to clean air and water, wise land use, and energy conservation. What can your class do to further the Sierra Club's goals? Have students interview people about clean air and water, and perhaps other ecological problems in your community. They may want to write an editorial on the basis of the information and opinions that they gather.

May 31 • Outdoors Day

Walt Whitman, the great American poet, was born on this day in 1819. He wrote *Leaves of Grass*, a famous book of American poetry. Listen to his poem about the outdoors:

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose
Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,
It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth.

What does he mean by this? Have any of your students ever experienced the things he talks about? Let students do some writing about their most special time out of doors. Tell them to use all their senses and really make their writing "live." What do they hear, see, smell, taste, and feel? Encourage them to take their time and really go back there in their mind before they start writing. ■

11 Poetry

"The point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then, gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

Rainer Maria Rilke
Letters to a Young Poet

Starting with Little Things: POETRY IN THE CLASSROOM

Ingrid Wendt

A Poem is My Window

When I am sad I look in it.
When I am mad I look in it.
I love my window.

by Erika
Edison Elem. School

The time is 8:20 a.m., some morning last winter. The weather—grey, foggy, uncertain—like the inside of my head. Although I'm rushing to one of the (27) Eugene schools I am visiting this year, and I'm starting to think of the classes ahead, part of my mind is still on the poem I didn't finish last night. It's a long poem, like most I am writing these days, and so far it's only in fragments. Two nights in a row I've stayed up past midnight, staring at words that won't belong, straining to find new ones, forcing connections that just don't work. The knowledge I've published a book's worth of poems won't help. Again, as has happened before, I'm stuck.

But once in the classroom a new kind of mood takes hold. I knew it would happen, of course; it happens every morning. Kids—fourth graders, mostly, this year—are calling "Hi, Poet!" Getting their pencils and papers ready without being told (past our first day together), asking "What will we write today?" Slipping me poems written at home and folded to one-inch square (what's that in centimeters?). Something like magic could happen again today; all of us feel it. Something that takes the form of poems ("You know what, I never liked poems before—"). Something more than learning technique, the language of meter and rhyme and metaphor. Some new kind of communication, both private and shared; moments of sudden understanding—that curious, elusive mixture of knowledge and belief that was right here waiting to be found.

And how do we find it? How do our poems instruct not only our readers but ourselves, as writers? Enough that it happens, again and again. We learn through experience: words, used well, have power. Words, newly connected, can make new ideas; they can create—at least on the page—impossible, silly, lovely scenes. They can change our awareness of ourselves, each other, and the rest of the world.

Words, used well, have power.
Newly connected, they can make
new ideas; they can create impossible,
silly, lovely scenes.
Words can change our awareness
of ourselves, each other, and
the rest of the world. The same words
that we struggle so hard to learn to
spell, to print or write
in cursive, to make sentences
with—these words can be fun,
can be friends, can show us
we know far more
than we ever supposed.

Primitive cultures throughout history have always known this, and we learn from them. On the first day in class, I usually read from the Eskimo, Native American, and African people—poems like chants, like religious invocations in which saying a thing can make it happen.

We try it ourselves. After three months of drought, we chant for rain (and believe it or not, sometimes it sprinkles). We chant to save the seals, the whales. We chant for snow at Christmas, for love on Valentines Day, for spring to hurry up. Not that we're superstitious, exactly, but it's fun to pretend we are.

What is it we all are learning by writing our poems? I think in great part we are learning to trust and accept ourselves and each other; ideas that pop into our heads (maybe not always right, but now with a chance to be tested); connections —strange and dream-like—revealing truths logic might otherwise miss; images linking inner and outer, the known and the unknown, tangible and intangible, feared and loved.

Serious poems, funny poems, sometimes deeply profound poems. All of them written in less than 10 minutes, amid papers rattling, feet shuffling, pencils being sharpened, questions being asked ("How do you spell . . . .).

How do they do it? Why do I think I can't write without absolute silence, privacy, one favorite pen, white-ruled ring-binder paper, and all the rest? Well, longer poems are different, I say. There are all kinds of reasons I need what I need. Yes. But I'm learning from these kids.

I'm learning to do what all writers must: to trust in the moment of vision, to believe the unconscious knows what it's doing, to not be afraid of ideas that don't "fit in" right away. To not force myself into a pattern without understanding; to listen to my own inner rhythms. Why has this taken thirty-some years?

Thoreau once said something about hearing one's own private drum. Left to themselves, poems of feeling have their own kinds of music, too: patterns of sound, rhythms, counterpoints, parallel movements, rising and falling tempos. Not always the music of meter and rhyme, but an inner music that has (if we learn to listen) its own proper form. (That's one reason I always read each student's poem at the end of each class.)

Children know this, although many don't know they know. Their poems are always surprising me with their rhythms, ideas, images: how they build to a climax, how they know where to end.

One thing above all remains constant in each classroom experience; no matter what kinds of poems we write, we still can surprise ourselves and each other. The words we have struggled so hard to learn to spell, to print or write in cursive, to make sentences with—these words can be fun, can be friends, can show us we know far more than we ever supposed.

It has happened to me many times over by now, in the classroom and also back home—when the supper dishes are done, my daughter is tucked in and sleeping, the front page (at least) has been read—and my poem is just where I left it the night before. But now, wedged into my desk next to the clothes washer and dryer, I see last night's words aren't so bad after all. Those lines I'd thrown out: they fit somewhere else. This image reminds me of something forgotten. This phrase isn't what I intended—but look where it leads!

I'm writing faster now. The washer is sloshing, the dryer is thumping, the words keep happening onto the page. (Not all of them "right," of course, but there's always tomorrow to polish.) This poem is going to be finished. This poem will be good. I can feel it. ¶

[Ingrid Wendt is a widely published poet in Eugene, OR, who has worked as a writer in residence in Oregon schools for over 12 years.]

Peace Trek

Peace, the final frontier.
These are the voyages
Of the starship Peacefulpride.
Their five year mission
To seek out new peace
And new quiet,
To carefully go where
No man (or woman)
Has gone
Before. . . .

David W., gr. 4

Window

Carved by the sea.
Nature's window
to the canyon walls
of orange stone.
Cliffs of seagull nests,
Tides coming in
on sandy shores.
Blue dies
Pink skies
Night.

Rachel Z., gr. 5

Cursive,
long lines like a short worm.
Cursive,
twists and turns like a
person who can't sleep.
Cursive,
a handwriting that is
never perfect.

Tillie D., gr. 4

Poetry and Cooperative Learning

Jon Madian

Poetry lends itself particularly well to cooperative groups both on and off the computer. For poetry writing, especially at the computer, pairs of students work well. You will also want to consider whether or not to apply the formal evaluation procedures recommended by Johnson and Johnson. Certainly you will want to consider their ideas on heterogeneous groupings.

Since 1983 this column has developed ideas about a general scope and sequence that takes students, step by step, from writing simple chant poems to writing original free verse. Since we are beginning a new year, it seems wise to provide a general review of this sequence and to indicate how these forms might be developed within cooperative groupings.

Chant

The chant is probably the original poetry form, and is an ideal place to begin, whether your students are beginning writers or college seniors. The chant teaches that poetry, like language itself, begins in rhythm. Students with limited writing or English speaking skills can often succeed in this form. Here is a wonderful example of the chant poem by Erick Sun from Betty Booth's fourth grade class, Willow Elementary, Cerritos, CA. This poem was in response to a candle making activity.

DIP DIP DIP
Dip dip dip
We went around the class
Candle candle candle
It formed just like a glass
Waiting waiting waiting
As if we were braiding
Walking walking walking
And we were always talking

In this poem we see the pattern of alternating the chant line (a word, usually a verb, that is repeated) with a thought or descriptive line. Note that Erick has combined the chant form with similes in two instances. This is unusual when students first begin, but it is worth developing as they progress.

If you are doing cooperative groups, you may have the first child write a single chant line and then pass the paper, or the computer, to the next student, who writes a thought line and then a chant line. Now the second child passes the poem back to the first child or, if groups of three or more are involved, to the next child to his or her right. Where there are three or more students per group, the poem (paper or group using the computer) can travel in a circle. When the poem returns to the original author, he or she can complete the poem.

It's important that students understand that the poem is not their own individual product; therefore, they should not be frustrated or get mad at their partners if the poem goes in a direction that varies from the original intent. It is also important that students always read all preceding lines of the poem before adding their contribution.

Cooperative poetry writing has several strengths. It helps students gain confidence and learn forms. When students write in response to the line or lines written previously by others, it frees them to be more spontaneous and take the composing process less seriously. This can get students over their blocks in getting started and can help keep them going.

Acrostic

If the chant teaches that poetry begins in rhythm, the acrostic teaches that poetry develops through off-the-wall association, imaginative leaps, and through subtle or absurd connections or misconnections.

In the following acrostic we see how Catarina, a sixth grader at Palms Elementary, used the letters in the word THINKING, which is written vertically, as the initial letters for each line of her poem.

THINKING

T hinking of what to write.
H ow should I write this?
I think this is hard.
N o, I think it's easy now!
K aty loves poetry;
especially this one.
I am almost done!
N ow I only have one more left.
G ood, hurray. Yippee! I'm done!

If your students are working in cooperative groups of two, you could have them alternate lines. If they are in larger groups, have them pass the poems to their right after writing a line.

Another cooperative writing technique is to have the group of students choose their word or words and then brainstorm to determine how each line will be written. If they are using a computer, once they have a first draft, they can read through the poem and make revisions.

If the cooperative group has a name, students will enjoy writing an acrostic poem based upon their group's name. Other words which can be used for acrostic poems can

be drawn from science, social studies, literature, or math.

Transformation

The transformation form leads students toward an awareness of word choice and imagery and lays a foundation for simile and metaphor. In this form two nouns are joined by a verb of "transformation." This form teaches students to pay attention to verbs, because general verbs like "becomes," "changes into," "turns into," and "transforms into" are discouraged. If students use these verbs initially, have them erase or delete them once they've completed the first draft and then substitute more interesting verbs. For example, if a student writes "A flower becomes a house," it might be changed to "A flower blooms into a house."

Here is an example of a transformational poem by a group of third graders in the ABC District. Each line was actually on a separate sheet of paper and illustrated.

A book opens into a bridge

Tick, tock, tick, tock, tick, tock
A clock ticks into time.

A cloud puffs into a
teddy bear named Puff.

A ribbon twists into a bow,
which flutters into a butterfly.

You may want to try the pass-around strategy in which each student adds one line, or you may want students to brainstorm and collaborate in creating their product. A third alternative that this form suggests is to have each student simply write a noun. Then have them exchange papers. The next student thinks of a verb. The paper could be passed again, with the next student adding the second noun to complete the line. If this seems like too much poem passing, you may want to have the first student write a noun and the second student write a verb and a noun to complete the line, and then begin a new line with a new noun. Yet another variation is for all students to list pairs of nouns with spaces for the verbs. Then have them pass these noun lists, so that the next student can add the verbs that best join the nouns.

Haiku

Haiku makes students aware of the poetic potential within non-rhyming verse. For the early stages, it may well be best to tell students that a Haiku has three lines—a short line, a longer one, and another short one. In this way you avoid a preoccupation with getting the exact number of syllables (5-7-5) at the expense of the images.

Students need to hear a great deal of Haiku before they try to write one. An activity which helps students develop an ear for Haiku is to have them write the third lines which have been deleted from well written Haikus. To do this, you simply take some good Haikus and delete the third line. The students' task is to create their own ending and then to compare it with the original.

When doing cooperative groups, you may want students to brainstorm the entire poem, or you may want them to pass the poems along at the end of each line. Either way, you will find that Haiku is a delightful poetic puzzle that will engage your students' imaginations in the poetic problems of rhythm, word choice, imagery, and mood.

The air is cooler
My old coat is much smaller
No, I am bigger!

Poetry and Cooperative Learning Part 2

This two-part curriculum unit began in the September/October issue with a discussion and examples of the chant, acrostic, transformation and haiku poetry forms.

Simile

Simile takes students a step further into the world of imagery and symbolism. In future columns we will look at the vast world of symbolism and how to awaken awareness of symbolism in stories, poetry, songs, journals, and in visual media such as painting, film and television.

At a simple level you may ask students to write a poem in which they create several lines that complete one of these patterns:

"I am as _____ as a _____."
or
"My house is as _____ as a _____."

"Like" can be substituted for "as."
For example:

"I am like a _____."
"My room is like a _____."

Below is an example of a simile poem by Daniel Chen in Ms. Dominguez's third grade class, Wittman Elementary School, Cerritos, CA.

I'M A HOUSE

I'm as tall as a house,
Three stories high
I'm as sad as a house,
All lonely and shy.
I'm as dirty as
An old, dirty house.
I'm as nervous as a house
With bugs and a mouse.
I'm as dark as a house,
With dirty walls.
I'm as creepy as a house
With creepy halls.
I'm as sad as a house,
All lonely and shy.

Any of the cooperative strategies suggested earlier will work well. Students can take turns writing individual lines, so that each student can finish the simile he or she has begun. Students might work on one subject; for example, they might write a poem comparing themselves to water in lakes, oceans, streams, rivers and puddles.

Another approach is to have each student start the simile "My room is _____." The next student can finish it and begin a new line before passing the poem along. Other good subjects for similes in addition to houses, rooms and bodies of water are trees, stories, schools, games, pictures, food and books.

Metaphor

Metaphor takes students more directly into the world of imagery. A wonderful way to introduce metaphor is to have students revise their simile poems into metaphor poems by deleting the "as" or "like" words. "I am as lazy as a frog" changes into "I am a lazy frog." "I am angry like a fire" might become "I am an angry fire" or "I am a fire." If students have written their simile poems on the word processor, this revision will be effortless and quite satisfying.

Here we see Daniel's poem from above rewritten as a metaphor poem.

I'M A HOUSE

I'm a house,
Three stories high
I'm a house,
All lonely and shy.
I'm a house,
An old, dirty house.
I'm a house,
With bugs and a mouse.
I'm a house,
With dirty walls.
I'm a house,
With creepy halls.
I'm a house

Any of the cooperative learning strategies mentioned earlier will work well. A fun way to handle this might be to have one person say, "I am," and the next person completes the line with whatever comes to mind.

Free Verse

Free verse is poetry that finds its rhythmic and sound structure from within the imagery and theme of the poem. There are no external criteria. The writer is free to structure the poem in response to his or her own imagination, which in turn is driven by feelings, memories, ideas and language patterns. Free verse is highly individual, yet free verse can be written in groups of two or more simply by alternating lines or by brainstorming. Here is a poem written by three sixth graders who alternated lines:

GRADUATION

Well, it's almost time to graduate
To end this phase
I sort of feel I'm in a daze
I'm just looking forward to summer days
And no more school and no more rules
I want to lie on the beach
Time for swimming in the pool
But then I think of next year
I get scared
It's like starting all over
I've been here at Palms for six years
It won't be easy to shift gears
At least all my friends will be there
I'm glad I'm going on
I wish I could stay at Palms.

Perhaps the best cooperative activity for free verse is either collaborative writing, in which the entire group agrees upon a first line, second line, etc., or alternating lines, in which each student writes from within the privacy of his or her own imagination in response to the previous line or lines.

A variation of this is for a student to write an entire poem on the word processor. The next student then rewrites as much or as little as he or she chooses. A third student could follow the second and so forth, until the original writer returns to see what has become of his or her creation. You can decide whether or not to allow students to do a final rewrite, or you may leave that up to the original poet.

Evaluation

One of the greatest contributions of the cooperative learning movement are the student group evaluation strategies—strategies that enable students to evaluate themselves, their process and their products. Cooperative learning has also delineated some strategies and criteria for teachers to use in evaluating group process. Although the criteria for evaluating group process should work well for poetry, you will want to carefully consider whether (and how) to evaluate poetry as a product. Most people involved in teaching poetry prefer not to grade or evaluate their students' poetry, other than giving feedback about what the reader feels works well or works less well. ■

POETRY LESSONS DESIGNED FOR COMPUTER PUBLISHING

Jon Madian

RIDDLES

A balanced writing curriculum emphasizes writing based upon objective information and rational analysis, as well as upon affective motives and intuitive realizations. Riddles are a fine way to help students at all grade levels develop their observational skills, learn to write for a specific audience, and practice sequencing information to achieve a desired effect.

Explain to students that their job is to write riddles. Riddles about anything—parts of the body, animals, foods, games, feelings, or objects in the classroom. Explain that to write a good riddle you need to start with very general and not too helpful hints at the beginning, followed by increasingly specific hints to help the person guess correctly.

A helpful image is a triangle divided into about seven slices. Each slice represents the usefulness of the clue. The narrowest slice at the top represents the least helpful clue; as you move down toward the base, more and more information is provided. By the time you reach the bottom, the audience should be able to guess. The best riddles will require several clues.

Here are some of the traits, qualities, or characteristics around which clues can be constructed:

material	location	texture
color	shape	behavior
size	value	frequency of use
function	cost	rhymes with

category (toy, game, etc.)

Have students write riddles, or make a riddle book for younger students, parents, grandparents, or peers. Libraries have lots of riddle books. Has anyone seen a book of riddles from around the world? Perhaps Peter Anderson's BookNet could work on compiling such a book.

A good technique for sharing riddles is to have students first write their clues in a word or two. Then let the riddler give his or her clue followed by one guess from a classmate. If the clue does not elicit the correct answer, the riddler gives another clue and calls on another student.

Twenty Questions is a fine game to help students develop their riddle making and riddle guessing skills. Here is an example the teacher might use in the classroom to help students see how it is done.

I'm thinking of something that is made of metal.
(student guesses)

It is usually found on the floor. (student guesses)

It is curved at the top and bottom. (student guesses)

It starts out hollow. (student guesses)

It is gray green. (student guesses)

Some people think it's a basketball hoop.
(student guesses)

That's right! It's a wastebasket.

COLORS AND SHAPES

The following poem was a group composition in a fifth grade class. My goal was to help students explore the elements of blank verse. To do this I suggested that we begin with a chant to help us establish a rhythm and then move on to a memory or a simile.

Shapes and colors
Colors and shapes

The soft yellow curve
of a banana
reminds me of a new moon
and of red apples on a tree
which reminds me that Christmas
will be soon

Yesterday the clouds blew
across the sky and I
thought of great gray
elephants all dressed
in feathers

Then the wind blew
rain fell all night
it tiptoed
softly on the ground
like the rattling of
fall leaves

I thought of the silent stepping
of my cat. She was
orange and white.
She used to
bring me dying birds.
I couldn't save them.
She was so proud.
I told her she was a fine
huntress. Then I went
into the bathroom
to be sick.

She hunted more when she was
pregnant, as if
to feed her young.

She went into my next door
neighbor's garage to
have her kittens. An hour
later I followed to see
her babies.

I knew she'd be proud
to show them to me.
The garage was silent.
No mewing little voices.
I left the door open. Then
I saw her. Curled like a
curving banana. Lying on
her side. Her legs stretched
wide. Her stomach round as
a watermelon full of seeds.
The kittens were moving inside.
That's how she died.

Colors and shapes
Shapes and colors

After we'd written the poem, we talked about how memories help us find concrete images with strong affective ties, and about how the simple rhythm and concept of "colors and shapes" provides a thematic underpinning as its meaning expands into "the pattern of events" as the poem unfolds. We had no idea in the beginning where our poem was going.

Finally, we talked about how beginning with a rhythm (set up by a chant), then going to a few general memories (perhaps a simile), and then to a main memory or fantasy can lead to a fine poem. On the other hand, it may end up only being an exercise, an approach to poetry. Like a batter at the plate, we cannot expect to hit a home run (poem) every time we limber up our imaginations and take pencil in hand.

We put our heads down and searched for visual imagery with no special meaning or known history, and we searched for imagery which contained the theme of an important memory. We talked about the fact that such thematic imagery may be either visual or verbal. The author's knowledge that it is an inspiration may only be a quiet persistence, a recurring thought or a repeating phrase. Sometimes a potent image seems to have no special insistence of luminosity. Only when you follow it does it begin to grow, to glow, and to take shape.

THE WEDNESDAY SKY

On a spectacularly sky-full day, a group of fifth and sixth graders went out to lie on the grass and watch the sky. Later they returned to the language lab and with adult leadership created the following poem. Note the reliance on simile.

The Wednesday Sky

Clouds, clouds, clouds
Like gray waves of water
Like a gray rolling sea

Clouds shaped like dogs
And some shaped like cats
A soaring white unicorn
A gray prowling panther

Sky, sky, sky
As soft as a bunny
As round and gray
As an elephant

The air so soft
so warm and cool
cozy on my body
like a fur coat
like a sky coat
blown of gray clouds
soft as feathers

The clouds are
weather feathers

A BLENDING OF FORMS

As students worked with chants, transformations, and elements of blank verse, they began to blend the various poetic figures. Here is a wonderful little poem by a third grader. Note how the lines progress from chant to simile to transformation to a simple statement and back to transformation. This pattern emerged rather spontaneously. All the students were asked to do was to write a chant which then moves to a simile. However, we'd been working on transformations a few weeks earlier.

Cold, cold, cold,
I'm as cold as a penguin.
Tall, tall, tall,
I am as tall as a giant.
An egg turns into a button.
Dirt, dirt, dirt,
I like dirt.
An arm turns into a baseball.

by Marissa

HOMONYMS IN POEMS

Poetry is often a word game. Homonyms provide a wide field for the play of such games. Since learning homonyms is important for developing writing and reading skills, homonym poems are an excellent way to build composing, vocabulary, and spelling skills.

With younger writers, you may want to insist that each stanza or line contains only one form of the homonym. At early stages this avoids confusion. You may also want to have students begin with the familiar chant form. Here are some homonym poems, going from the simple to more complex.

Too Too

Too too too
I went too fast
Too too too
I went too slow
Too slow or too fast
Come in first or come in last

To to to
Go to bed
To to to
Go to school
To to to
Go to the beach
To to to
Go to play with two friends, too

Ads Add

Ads ads ads
An ad for McDonalds
An ad for Burger King
An ad for Wendy's
Adds up to three ads

One ad
Add one ad
Add one ad
Adds up to three ads

Eight Ate

Eight eight eight
Eight for dinner at eight
Ate ate ate
Eight ate dinner at eight
Wait wait wait
No one wanted to wait
Weight weight weight
No one wanted to gain weight

The Basis of Baseball

Basis basis basis
The basis of baseball is

bases
bases bases
bases

Bases bases bases
Four bases are the basis
of baseball

The Ball Turned into a Dance

I'll never forget
The night we played baseball
On Halloween
The bat screeched
And flew out of my hands
And the ball turned into a dance

A Creaking Creek

Creak creak creak
The creek creaks
As the ice breaks
Nature takes off her brakes
And the spring sings

Someone

Someone and someone
Sums to a sum
of two someones
or is it two sum ones

I Know I Knew

A gnu never knew
How to spell no
But I know how
to spell knew
What confuses me
Is how to spell gnu

The Rain Reigns Over Us All

Rain rain rain
The rain falls like shiny dimes
Filling puddles, swelling streams
Smelling sweet and green

Rain rain rain
Pitter upon pitter
Upon splashing pitter patter
Everywhere, circles of water
Growing wider from splashing centers

Reign Reign Reign
The queen reigns
Over the ball
Pitter patter pitter pitter pat
See it raining on the reigning queen!
Pitter pitter patter pat pat

Reins reins reins
With the leather reins in her hands
The queen reins in the reins on her reindeer
She reigns over the reindeer
Pitter patter pitter patter pitter pat pat
And the rain reigns over us all
And that is that

I Knew I Knew

I knew I knew
How to spell knew
I know I knew
How to spell know
Now I don't know
If I know
How to spell no
Or was it new
I was trying to spell
Now I don't know
Do you?

A DATA BASE OF HOMONYMS

You may want to have your class or school develop a data base of homonyms. This is a fine activity, because as students begin to gather homonyms they begin discovering them in the world of written and spoken language. I don't know if there's a definitive list of homonyms. People I've spoken with agree that the more you search for them, the more you find! Here's a partial list:

aide	aid		air	heir	
aisle	isle	I'll	ant	aunt	
ate	eight		bare	bear	bear (carry)
basis	bases		be	bee	
bridal	bridle		by	buy	bye
caret	carrot		cereal	serial	
chance	chants		coarse	course	
creek	creak		dear	deer	
die	dye		flour	flower	
forth	fourth		four	for	fore
fur	fir		great	grate	
grown	groan		heal	heel	
here	hear		idle	idol	idyll
in	inn		knows	nose	
lone	loan		made	maid	
male	mail		medal	meddle	
meet	meat		mind	mined	
need	knead		new	knew	
no	know		not	knot	
our	hour		pain	pane	
pair	pare		pallet	palette	palate
pause	paws		peace	piece	
pedal	peddle		peel	peal	
presence	presents		principle	principal	
raise	raze		read	reed	
reign	rein	rain	right	write	rite
rode	road		root	route	rout
scene	seen		see	sea	si
scents	cents	sense	seam	seem	
serf	surf		sheer	shear	
sight	site	cite	slay	sleigh	
soar	sore		soul	sole	
sum	some		sun	son	
sow	sew	so	stake	steak	
stationery		stationary	stare	stair	
steal	steel		straight	strait	
tacks	tax		tail	tale	
taught	taut		tea	tee	
there	they're	their	threw	through	
to	two	too	tow	toe	
vain	vein	vane	wait	weight	
waive	wave		waste	waist	
weak	week		wear	where	
whirled	world		whole	hole	
whose	who's		wood	would	
won	one		you	ewe	yew ■

Horton Watkins High School Poetry

Student poets at Horton Watkins High School have many opportunities to receive help with and response to their writing. Creative writing class offers them several techniques for generating ideas and for editing their early drafts until the "real poem" begins to shine through. At this point they may choose to receive group response from classmates or to schedule a personal conference with the creative writing teacher. When a poem approaches its final stages, a poet may choose to submit it to the school literary magazine, *Crescendo*. Here, further suggestions are often made by the *Crescendo* editorial board. At the end of the process, a poem may be published in *Crescendo* and made available to a large audience of students and community members. Poems from *Crescendo* often are selected for reprinting in *Riverstates Review of Young Writers*, a national magazine of work by high school writers. Student writers are also encouraged to enter local and national poetry contests sponsored by various organizations. Each of the students whose poetry is represented below had poems chosen for *Riverstates Review* and/or has received local and state awards. Each is a serious and skilled young poet.

Loving Like Rodin

Juliet Feibel

By you we were wrought
from cool, pale-veined marble,
the rough dark we lingered in.

We love in excess,
shaved and pared and burned
to the panicked bones.
We cannot help but name you master;
call you artist.

We are the Kiss; we are the Storm.

Playing to the Cold

Angela Brown

A purple sky dulls my senses,
I strike myself as odd.
So I stand smiling with my violin
in the thin Paris air.

I pry out a delicate tune
at two o'clock a.m.
and though to me it sounds heavenly,
I know all mothers hate it.
And it is snowing.

I wear a funny costume
because I like it. Some demon
stares me down
with a common demon stare.
Am I a common artist?
I hate the snow.

I want beggars to ask me for my song,
and I want mothers
to hum it to their babies. I am white on
white.
I want so much to love this burning
snow.

Childhood Home

Kathy Dull

and now an office building stands on 180
Homer street,
an address my mother trained me to recite to a
nice policeman
if I were lost.
My sand box and shiny red bike are gone now,
rusting somewhere like nails of an old house.
The building is tall,
so tall that the sun blinds it
from the newly paved street below.
But in its roots I know it feels
cobblestones beneath cement and
with its walls I know it hears
echoing cries of a young girl.

Collision

Karen Sherman

with your hand on my shoulder
you are whispering
softly hissing
in my ear
how gold the cold sun is
and i am chilled in yellow
nodding my head
o yes the sun is
and you have moved away
i topple over the edge
of your presence
your voice inside me echoing
and now i am the lights
you see when you press on your eyes
i am exploding in the dark
breaking through the windows
crashing into the television
slamming into you.

12 Curriculum/Study Units

"Nothing interests us which is stark or bounded, but only what streams with life, what is in act or endeavor to reach somewhat beyond."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

A SCOPE AND SEQUENCE FOR STORY WRITING

Jon Madian

Developing a scope and sequence for story writing is, in some sense, nonsense, since children just naturally elaborate upon their real and imaginary experiences. However, when we begin to help students put their story ideas into book form, perhaps there are a few principles of organization, theme, character and setting that will help lead them on, step by step. So, with the understanding that in some ways a scope and sequence of story writing is inimical to the holistic nature of story conception and expression, let's explore what may be some useful ideas in sequencing story writing and book making activities.

Is there a best place to begin story writing and book making? After a number of years of creating all kinds of books and stories with students, a possible structure has emerged. This structure takes as its organizing premise that the less plot, characterization, and setting required, the simpler the story. It also assumes that there is a relationship between reporting real tales and invented ones.

1. Number and Alphabet Books

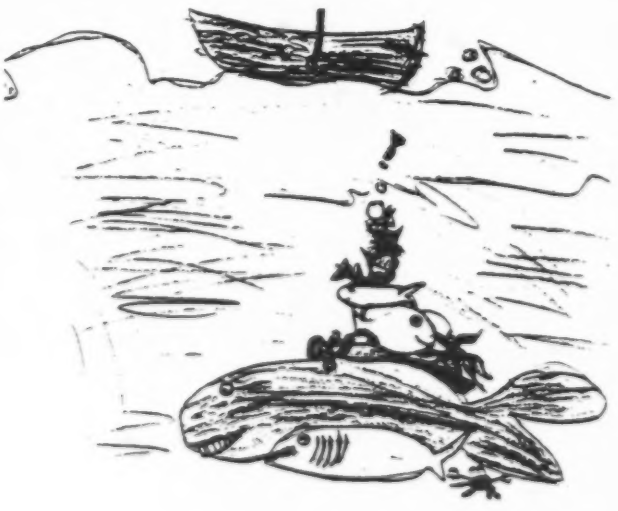
With the exception of the simple personal story or account such as "I went to the store and a dog barked and I dropped my candy and ran home," it seems likely that number and alphabet books are the simplest story form. This is because both number and alphabet books have no plot, characters, or settings to deal with. Each page can have its own theme, or there may be a theme running throughout the book. Either way, on page one you will find something about the number "1" in a number book and something about the letter "A" in an alphabet book. Five pages later in the number book, you'll learn about the number "5" and you'll learn about the letter "E."

Designing number and alphabet books can be an engaging design activity for all grades. They are a challenging design problem for the advanced writer, as well as for the beginner. Begin by having students look at and read as many of these kinds of books as possible. They'll see that there are many different approaches. You may want to use cooperative groups, so that two or more students are responsible for designing a page or an entire book. Finally, let students share their products with students in other classes or through their school library media center.

2. Stacking Stories

Next in complexity comes what we might call the "stacking story." *The House that Jack Built, A Fly Went By, I Met An Old Woman Who Swallowed A Fly* and *The Napping House* are all fine examples of stacking stories.

From this list of examples, you may have concluded that a stacking story involves having one object or animal stack upon, against, or within another. Stacking stories are slightly more complex than number and alphabet books. While setting, character development, and plot are still minimal, there is a sequential development that must be invented.

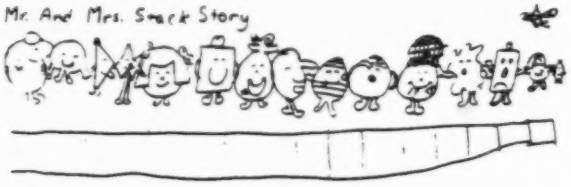


There are two different kinds of stacking stories—horizontal and vertical. *A Fly Went By* is an excellent example of a **horizontal** stacking story, where the sequence from smaller to larger is in the form of a chase. *The Napping House* by Audrey and Don Wood, on the other hand, is a beautifully illustrated and written vertical stacking story in which a pyramid of sleeping people and creatures is built and then exploded by the bite of a "wakeful flea."

To inspire students to write stacking stories, begin by reading as many as possible. Tell students that the creatures or objects in the stack will be determined by an environment or by a "creature theme"—for example, a jungle, barnyard, underwater, forest, zoo, circus, Halloween, Christmas, prehistoric, bird, bug, school, closet, or the kitchen.

As you read the stories, if it is a vertical stack, pay special attention to how the stack is disrupted or undone. There are only two kinds of decisions students need to make to create stacking stories: the nature or ecosystem of the stack (who goes in it) and how the stack is undone.

Stacking stories, like number and alphabet books, contain a basic pattern which progresses from page to page. Students enjoy working within this structure. They know where their story is going from the beginning. The stacking story provides tremendous opportunities to apply grouping and sequencing skills, as well as graphic and literary imagination.



Cooperative groupings work well for such a story. If there are going to be several creatures in the stack, each student can specialize in drawing certain creatures and other elements like the sun, clouds, or a tree. Then students can design each page together, with each student contributing to each page.

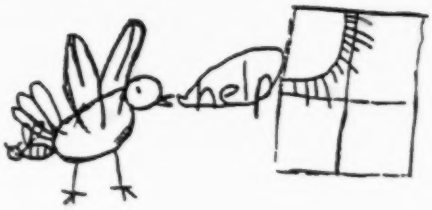
The choice of words can be very important. Good words for sleeping are very helpful in a vertical stacking story—words like snooze, doze, slumber, dream, or nap. Other related words are: purr, cuddle, snuggle, rock, purr. Wake-up words may include: jiggle, tickle, wiggle, bite, sting, and scratch.

In a horizontal "eating" or "chasing" story, it is also important to brainstorm good verbs such as eat, bite, swallow, gulp, chew, inhale, slurp, drink, run, race, hop, skip, slither, slide, jump, crawl, stampede....

Here is an example of a stacking story by Rana, a second grader in the ABC District:

Animals Sleeping In the Sky

Once upon a time there was a goose sleeping on a cloud. Then came an eagle who thought it cozy and cuddley. So he slept on the goose's back. There was a bird flying by who saw the stack, so he layed on the eagle's back. Then came a black bee and stung the bird, who jumped on the eagle, who screamed and woke the goose, and then they fell on the cement and got hurt.



3. Animal Stories

After the stacking story, or perhaps at about the same level (and also among the beginning book patterns that children enjoy writing) are animal stories. Animal stories can be as simple or complex as the writer wishes. To expand your students' writing vocabulary, you may want to brainstorm words that relate to the animal they have chosen. What words describe how the animal looks, moves, and behaves? To further involve students in their animal stories, you may want to have them write animal stories as part of an animal unit (see p. 121).

4. Personal Stories

As mentioned at the beginning, personal stories are stories that lack invention. Yet they are an important place to begin to develop storytelling skills. A personal story may be the simplest of all, since the main character is oneself and the event is not invented but merely retold. Here are two examples of personal stories which were written on the theme "I'll Never Do THAT Again!"

One time I was turning on the turning bars.
Then I hit my chin. My top tooth hit my chin
and made a hole on my lip. It hurt too.
I'll never do that again because it hurt
and I do not want a hole in my chin again.

Trisha Miranda

One day I hit a ball over a fence.
I had to climb the fence. When I climbed the fence
I fell down. That happened on April 5th.
It happened at my house. I'll never do that again
because I don't want to fall down again.

Loara Martinez

5. Exaggerated Fiction

For most students, recounting an event that happened to them is easier than making up a story, but there are some students who seem to find more vitality in imagination than in reality. A wonderful Dr. Seuss story that introduces students to exaggeration in telling a tale "told by a child" is Dr. Seuss's first book, *And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street.* Fiction with exaggeration in a personal narrative is easily grasped by early writers. Let students see what they can write to the topic "The Day it Rained Cats and Dogs."

Tall tale characters like Paul Bunyon and Pecos Bill are great American classics that can also introduce students to the fun of imagination and exaggeration.

6. Fairy Tales and Myths

Perhaps a little more complex than animal and fictitious personal stories are fairy tales and myths. Students need a great deal of exposure to these forms before they try to write them. They need to hear lots of these stories and to discuss and analyze the ingredients.

A fine introduction to myths and fairy tales is the simple transformational story told in the first person. The story begins, "When I woke up, I was sure surprised to see that I'd turned into a ___." Of course, students can vary this beginning: "When I woke up, I felt strange. I lifted my head and it was so little and light. I wanted to move my arms to push the blankets back, but I had none. Then I felt I didn't have two legs anymore, just one. What has happened to me? I wondered. Then I realized I was a snake...."

Once the story establishes the animal the student has turned into, the story can develop how the animal moves and thinks and how the world looks from the animal's perspective. Now that we have a sense of the animal as character, create a middle to the story. Where does the animal go (usually out the window), and what does he or she discover? The ending is the turning of the animal back into the writer or, which seldom happens, the decision to remain the animal.

The following is the beginning and ending from a story by Sandy, a fourth grader at Stowers Elementary in ABC:

One morning when I woke up I was a hamster. I was really mixed up. I was warm and furry. I went to see myself in the mirror. So I thought that my mother would be surprised so she was cooking breakfast and I went to see her. She looked down. She screamed and kicked me out of the house, so I went to another city....

(the angel in the new city explains that)....the evil queen in the palace did a spell on you. I asked what could I do to turn to myself again? She said you have to get there by 12:00 and get into her kingdom and get her wand and face it toward the moon by midnight, 12:00 p.m. So she creeped in a mouse hole and saw that she saw a hamster just like her so she asked who are you? I am from a house. I use to have a sister whose name is Sandy Nam. I said I am Sandy Nam and we told the whole story while we dug and got into the kingdom and got the wand and faced it toward the moon and the palace and everything disappeared and we turned to ourselves again.

Beginning both myth and fairy tale writing with simple person into animal transformations makes sense,

since transformation is perhaps the universal theme in these kinds of stories.

7. Mysteries, Myths and Other Original Stories

By the sixth grade, students are fascinated with mystery stories, fictional accounts of their peers, and biographies. They are also very capable of writing their own original myths and fairy tales. Students third grade and younger can also if they are exposed to lots of these kinds of stories.

The following myth was written by Karen Lee, a sixth grader in Mrs. Rommel's class at Stowers, ABC Unified School District. Prior to writing this myth, she had written a number of transformational poems and had read a number of myths.

HOW THE GIRAFFE GOT HIS LONG NECK
An original myth by Karen Lee

Long, long, long ago before the long-neck giraffe existed, two short-neck giraffes were roaming across the grasslands of Africa. One was a boy, the other a girl, and they were in love. They liked to play games.

"Let's play Hide and Seek," declared Kalena.

"Sounds great!" agreed Marcus.

Kalena ran and hid behind some tall trees while Marcus counted to 20.

"OK, here I come!" shouted Marcus.

He searched and searched and searched. Nowhere could he find Kalena. He asked his grassland friends, but none could help. Finally, Marcus met a magnificent blue bird.

"Yes, I saw Kalena. The terrible, ugly witch of the jungle captured her. They headed for the great mountain."

"I must find her. I will not stop looking," Marcus shouted.

Meanwhile, Kalena was being held a prisoner. The wicked jungle witch planned to have Kalena for her winter meals. Kalena kept looking and listening, hoping Marcus would find her. She even prayed to her animal god, Divad.

"You must send a signal to let Marcus know where you are," Divad explained to Kalena. "Keep looking and listening and Marcus will save you."

So Kalena looked and looked. As she did this, her neck kept getting longer and longer. As Marcus searched, his neck stretched too. Marcus could now look over tree tops and hills. He eventually could reach his head to the top of the great mountain and peek over. There, beyond miles of tall jungle trees, he saw his Kalena. Her head had stretched high like a gigantic tree among the tall trees.

Marcus ran as fast as he could--across the grasslands, over the great mountain and through the jungle. His strong legs stomped on the wicked witch and killed her! Because of the searching, these two animals stretched their necks extremely long--and that's why the giraffe has a long neck!!!

Summary

Students at any level, even college, can benefit by following a progression that begins with a number and/or alphabet book and moves into mysteries, biographies, and biographical fiction. If students feel they are too old to write some of these forms, you may motivate them by having them write the stories to share with younger students. ■

ANIMAL UNIT

The following assignment sheet is offered as a model for integrating different kinds of writing, with an emphasis on creative, personal, journal, and expository research writing. This assignment uses right and left brain functions, so that sensory, cognitive, affective, and intuitive functions stimulate and inform each other.

The assignment sheet was handed out, and students helped set a reasonable due date—about six weeks later was agreed upon (students wanted more time; the teacher wanted less!). She felt they'd focus better if they had more pressure. I felt that to get into the various sections and share their progress with each other, students needed more time.

We did not set up an effective system for students to share, question, and learn from each other, although it would have been a natural. Every other day or so, students could make a draft of their work in response to one section and share it with classmates. In this way students' work serves as a model, and they gain from sharing their progress and providing feedback.

The assignment was discussed when the student assignment sheet was passed out. We created oral and written examples of poems, collaborative stories, fictitious and factual journals.

When I do this unit again, I will add a discussion of the animal's totemic or mythic qualities. In schools where the scientific method of inquiry is emphasized, and where students are familiar with generating and testing hypotheses, I would ask them to apply the scientific method to one area of their animal's behavior or biology. I would ask students to generate a testable hypothesis about their animal, and explain how they would test their hypothesis.

Here are some examples of the students' creative writing:

Essay Written by an Eagle

Poisons used by farmers in areas where we eagles live is proving to be very dangerous to us. My sister died last month because she caught and ate a gopher from Farmer John's field. This gopher had ingested some poison. My dad is now very, very sick and my mom weak because of a pesticide used at Sam Smith's ranch. He had killed a fox for the family this winter. The eggs that my wife lay recently are not strong. I know this is due to the pollution in the river waters.

Scientists should create a poison that will not be harmful to eagles. Dumping garbage into the rivers should be stopped too. We cannot relocate. This is our land. My ancestors have lived on and over these lands for years and years. The ranges where we roam must not be harmed by farmers' pesticides nor pollution of the rivers.

The eagle is the national emblem of the United States of America. We are proud to represent this grand country. To be sure we continue to exist, we must be helped. We must be protected.

Journal by an Eagle

Day 1

Dear Diary,

Today was an unusual day. There was plenty of food all around so I didn't have to look very hard. I spent most of my time soaring the skies. When I eat so easily, I have plenty of time to play.

Day 2

Dear Diary,

I couldn't believe it! Today had even more animals than yesterday. I killed a rabbit and a gopher. I ate most of them but left the scraps because I didn't need them.

Day 3

Dear Diary,

Today all the animals were gone. I had trouble finding food. I wish I had eaten those leftover scraps because today I would have been filled. I hunted and hunted and finally chased down a squirrel. I sure learned a lesson. I better appreciate having food from now on.

Poetry

Acrostic

Elegant
And swift
Gliding through the
Light sky
Eagles fly high

Haiku

He flies very high
He nearly reaches the sky
The eagle is free

Chant

Screech, screech, screech!
The eagle comes attacking
Grabbing, piercing, killing his prey
Then soars away

Individual Blank Verse

So powerful and strong
Glorious as song
Soaring through the sky
Flying up so high

The eagle is brave
His eyesight so keen
Representing our country
A sight to be seen

ANIMAL UNIT
STUDENT ASSIGNMENT SHEET

These activities can be done in any order you choose. Some of the activities should be done more than once.

DRAW YOUR ANIMAL IN HIS NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

(You may wish to look at drawings by other artists to get ideas of how to render the animal.)

WRITE AT LEAST THREE OF THE FOLLOWING FROM THE ANIMAL'S PERSPECTIVE:

1. A nightmare the animal might have
2. A happy dream the animal might have
3. A funny dream the animal might have
4. An essay the animal might write taking a position on an issue that concerns him or her
5. A letter the animal might write to some other animal or person for a particular purpose—social, political, etc.

POETRY

Write about your animal in at least three of the following forms: acrostic, chant (include sounds and environment), Haiku, cooperative blank verse, or individual blank verse.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Write a report that explains factually about your animal's behavior, psychology, and social, biological, and ecological aspects.

Read poems and stories about your animal, and write a description. Explain the problem, the character and setting, and tell your view of the story or poem, particularly as it relates to how your animal is depicted.

JOURNAL

Write a fictitious journal by your animal about two or three consecutive days in his or her life. Try to carry themes forward from day to day.

Write a factual journal expressing why you chose your animal.

DRAMATIZATION

Alone, or with a friend or two, dramatize some events that would occur in your animal's life.

STORY WRITING

Write a story about your animal by yourself.

Write a collaborative story with a friend, including your friend's animal in the story.

Mythology

In the Spring 1986 issue we discussed the importance of focusing on *units* of instruction rather than on *lessons* of one hour or less. In that issue an integrated unit—ANIMALS—was presented. Since completing the ANIMAL unit, we developed the integrated MYTHOLOGY unit which follows.

The mythology unit was designed for two gifted sixth grade classes in two different schools in Cerritos, CA. In the first class students were given the assignment sheet below. They were asked to read a great number of myths, to summarize them in their own words, and to write their own myths. In the second class the assignment differed in that students were not assigned any mythology reading, summarizing, or retelling.

At the end of the year, students in both classes wrote original myths. Not surprisingly, the students who had

Mythology Assignment Sheet

1. **Read and retell in a summarized form of at least one long paragraph each, a myth or fairy tale from Africa, Asia, North America (American Indian), Mexico or South America, and Europe. You will need to go to the library to find anthologies of myths from different parts of the world.**
   - **How did you feel about the myth?**
   - **What did you think or learn from the myth?**
   - **Why do you think people told this particular myth?**
   - **Compare each of the myths with at least one other myth you know.**
   - **Draw one illustration for each myth.**
2. **Write a poem of any kind which develops the theme of each of the four myths.**
3. **Interview a parent, grandparent, or other person (preferably older and from another country) and record a myth they heard when they were young. Transcribe this myth.**
4. **Choose one of the four myths from #1 or the "Oral History" myth from #3 and tell it to the whole class or in a small group setting.**
5. **Write an original myth. It could be a myth from an ancient culture, one from our modern world, a myth from a future culture, or of people from another planet. Give the real or imaginary time in which the myth is being told and a brief description of the culture and what the myth would help them to understand.**
6. **Write a persuasive letter explaining what grade you deserve.**
7. **Put your work in a folder and include a Table of Contents and page numbers.**

done a good deal of reading, retelling, and summarizing were much more successful at writing their own myths.

The moral? Whatever the writing activity, be sure to begin early on having students read many good examples, and perhaps have them summarize or retell the piece. You may want to build slowly toward having students create their own original work.

Samples of Student Writing from the Mythology Unit

Make Up Your Own Myth
by Richard Lee

Long time ago in Britain, people became miserable and scared when it was night because it was very dark outside. The moon was also so dark that they could barely see it. People tried to come out with an idea that could solve the problem. Finally a scientist catapulted a large amount of crystals to the moon to cover it all over to make it bright. But still there wasn't that much brightness because there wasn't that much of crystals around so it became a failure. Few days later, a bee keeper lost one of his bees. He was searching around until he found two bears bothering it. Bears like honey so bees are attractive to them. The bee keeper got mad and threw his golden ax at the bears. He threw it so hard that instead of hitting the bears, it went up to the sky and hit the moon. The moon became golden and was brighter than the crystals.

In a clear night when you see the moon you notice that it is kind of golden. The black spots on the moon are those of crystals; it looks dark because it is no match for the golden color of the ax.

Richard explains:

"The myth that I wrote occurred in Britain. If this was a real myth from Britain, I think people would tell this story because this would solve the question of 'How did moon get its light?' or 'What are the black spots on the moon?' I think it would be perfect to be a British myth because ancient British people grew bees to collect just like this story that I made up."

Below, Kori H., also from Mrs. Rommel's class, compares a Russian myth, "The Girl in the Moon" with a Japanese myth, "The Rabbit in the Moon." She states:

They both try to explain what each culture saw when the people gazed into the moon, and how these figures got there. Each used their surroundings and particular circumstances and created an acceptable explanation. Each story had a second message as well. The Rabbit was given immortality because of his kindness. The Girl was placed in the moon for hope and happiness.

Here Kori states her opinion about a Japanese folktale, "The Grateful Statues":

I really enjoyed this tale from Japan. It reminded me of my own grandparents and how kind they are. The old man sounded like my late Jichan (grandpa). Reading this story made me feel very good. I liked it because it showed an act of kindness being rewarded. It was a very simple and beautiful story. The humble and unselfish act of the old man was recognized and through his kind deed, he and his wife were given a Happy New Year.

Below Kori offers two of her own poems, the first in response to the African myth, *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears*:

Tattle Tales

Jump, jump, jump
People always jump to conclusions
Hum, hum, hum,
Hear the hum of gossip
Tattle, tattle, tattle
The fault is always his
Yak, yak, yak
Who needs to hear the facts
Gripe, gripe, gripe,
The truth is always stretched
Stop, stop, stop,
I don't want to hear any more!

And last, here is a poem that sums up Kori's perception of myths:

Why?

Why are things the way they are?
Many questions come from afar
Why is the moon so full up high?
Why are the stars in the sky?
Why is the sea blue and wide?
Why does the mole run and hide?
Why did the tortoise beat the hare?
Why is the possum's tail bare?
The answers lie in the stories past
In books and songs these tales last
Use your imagination
For a more creative explanation ■

Making History—A Library Unit to Accompany 4th and 5th Grade Students' Study of History

Sharon Franklin

This unit was written for use in Eugene School District 4J schools and is excerpted here with permission.

Making History provides a way for librarian/media specialists to bridge and expand 4th and 5th grade students' study of history by:

• introducing students to some diaries, collections of letters, (auto)biographies, and historical fiction—books in the library that often are overlooked.

• helping students to understand that we learn about history not just through factual sources such as history books or encyclopedias, but also through people's first-hand accounts of their own lives.

DISCUSSION—KEY POINTS

Ask students to help think of some "forms" in which people have recorded their own history (through diaries, letters, historical fiction, poetry, music, and art, to name a few). Also, in many cultures—Native American, for example—the oral tradition has been a rich and valued part of life. Such accounts enrich our knowledge and understanding of a particular period of time.

It is interesting to think about how we are familiar with the lives of "famous" people. Why is it important to hear first-hand accounts of the lives of "not-so-famous" people?

1. First-hand accounts help us to realize that each person's life is important—we all have stories to tell. And these stories are an integral part of the overall history of a certain place and period of time. For example, we can study the facts about life in this country during the Great Depression, and we can add to that understanding by hearing stories about what it was like to grow up on a farm in the Midwest during that time.

2. First-hand accounts give us much more than factual information. They place the event in time—we feel the feelings and experiences the weather and other everyday events—which enables us to live into that period in history, many times through the eyes of people who may view the same event or period of time very differently.

3. First-hand accounts help us to see similarities between other people's lives and feelings and our own.

4. First-hand accounts are a powerful reminder that we are all "making history" every day.

BOOK TALK

Now you've set the stage. Most library media centers will have many books on the topics listed here in addition to those listed. You may also want to borrow others that you don't have to show students as you do your book talk. Note: The starred items pertain to Oregon history. You may want to substitute books that have to do with your own local history.

LETTERS

West from Home:
Letters of Laura Ingalls Wilder

Letters she wrote to Almanzo when she took the train from St. Louis to San Francisco in 1915 (she was 48) to visit her daughter Rose.

• **Spencer Butte Pioneers** *(compiled by Lois Barton)*

Particularly interesting because of the "local history." Includes some letters, along with photos, maps, and other reproductions. Read the letter on p. 51, written in 1896, along with the introduction. Put it in context. What was happening in 1896? (For instance, it often helps me to think of my grandmother, who was born in 1880.)

DIARIES

On the Way Home *by Laura Ingalls Wilder*

Diary of a trip from South Dakota to Mansfield, Missouri, in 1894, when Laura was 27 and Rose was 7. Read a couple of entries—she writes about ordinary things—what they did, where they travelled and how far, the weather, what they ate....

A Gathering of Days—A New England Girl's Journal, 1930-32 *by Joan W. Blos*

Newbery award-winning book. Read an entry or two and listen to the language—the poetry.

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

Select some entries to read, and let students discover how much we learn about one girl's experiences during a particular period of time, and how much her journal adds to any study of World War II.

POETRY

A Child's Christmas in Wales *by Dylan Thomas*

Read the beginning and let kids hear the magic of his writing. Better yet, play the taped version with Dylan Thomas reading his own poem.

SHORT STORIES

Find a good "local" storyteller, and compile a "homemade" tape of stories.

• **Traces** *from Bear Wallow Press*

A gorgeous book. Read pages 104-106, 130.

(AUTO)BIOGRAPHIES

The Road From Home:
The Story of an Armenian Girl *by David Kherdian*

An extremely moving first-person account of a young Armenian girl (David Kherdian's mother) and her family who were forced to leave their home in Turkey in 1915. The book would make a powerful read-aloud that will provoke lots of discussion.

Self-Portrait: Margot Zemach,
written and illustrated by Margot Zemach

Read all of this short book out loud to students—it's a good example of a less "organized" and more visual way of talking about your life, plus it's contemporary.

The Upstairs Room *by Johanna Reiss*

Similar to **The Diary of Anne Frank**, except that Johanna lived to tell her story. Makes a good read-aloud.

Growing Up *by Russell Baker*

Although not a book written for children, pick an excerpt to read as an example of superb first-person writing.

ART

The Bedspread *by Sylvia Fair*

A charming picture book that shows how childhood memories can be recorded in stitchery on a bedspread. You might bring examples, or talk about how quilts often record events in a person's or whole family's life.

HISTORICAL FICTION

The Laura Ingalls Wilder books

This is a perfect opportunity to talk about why these books are catalogued fiction!

Add a touch of humor by playing an excerpt from Garrison Keillor's "recollections" of growing up in Lake Wobegone!

ACTIVITIES

You may want to choose one or a combination of 3 or 4 activities to complete your unit on Making History.

1. Journal writing from a period in history.

• If students are now studying a particular period in history—Oregon settlers, for example—have them create a diary of their life during that period. Before beginning to write their diary, have them complete the worksheet titled "Diary Background—Character & Setting." This will help students decide on a framework from which to write. The completed journals should cover about two weeks of time. Fabric or wallpaper sample covers (Early American designs) work well or, if you have access to a book of quilting patterns, show kids some traditional quilt patterns and let them pick one (or create one of their own) for a cover design.

• The Mayflower Passenger List (TWN, April/May 1987) is the basis for another journal-writing activity. Students can choose a passenger from the actual list of people on the Mayflower and write from that character's point of view. It's fun to see the interaction among the characters that students build into this activity.

2. Journal writing—the present.

Remind students that many of the books you shared with them are journals kept by kids their age. If they haven't already started a journal, this is a good time for them to begin. You may want to make journals with students and give them an opportunity to write in them. Let them talk about the kinds of things they include—drawings, poems, and "letters written but not sent" can also be added. Let them know that journals are personal and are shared only if the writer chooses to do so. And, journals don't have to be beautiful, perfect works of art, either....

3. Writing box.

It's very important for all of us as writers—or potential writers—to know that we don't have to have a beautiful, leather-bound journal and linen paper in order to write. In fact, lots of famous writers have used very unusual materials to write on. Gather together the materials listed below and do a "show and tell" for students.

- (napkin) "Mercer Mayer drew his sketches for **Beauty and the Beast** on napkins while on an airplane."

- (tiny homemade book of any kind) "Beatrix Potter wrote all of her stories in little tiny, homemade books."

- (small piece of paper) "Emily Dickinson wrote poems on small pieces of paper that she kept in a shoebox."

- (little yellow-lined paper) "Laura Ingalls Wilder used little 5-cent memorandum books and wrote on both sides of the paper with pencil."

Students may want to make a writing box. Show them a variety of papers that you have collected. Have them bring in many different kinds also to exchange with classmates. When will they write—when they wake up? —right before they go to sleep? They might consider ending each day's writing with a question about something they would like to know more about (much like E.B. White did, and as he wrote via Sam Beaver in **Trumpet of the Swan**).

4. Play a tape or invite someone to your class to tell stories about his or her life.

5. Collect and compile stories into a Making History book.

Students will ask a person they know (relative, friend, neighbor, etc.)—the older the better!—to tell them a story about their life. The stories may represent many different time periods, generations, and life conditions. They may be funny, tragic, and/or thought-provoking.

Talk with kids about how they might go about asking someone to tell them a story. Some older people may not think they have an "exciting" story to tell, but if they were asked to tell about what they did in school when they were a child, or a special birthday or other holiday, or about a very happy or scary or sad time, they will probably be able to think of lots of stories.

Give students a Cover Sheet to help them put the story in context. The Cover Sheet might include these 3 items:

a. This story is based on the experiences of _____.

b. Relationship of the person to you: _____.

c. The story takes place in _____ in the year _____, when the teller was _____ years old.

Have students write down the story outside of class, attach the Cover Sheet, and bring to class to share orally.

Students themselves, or perhaps a parent, can type the stories into the computer to be compiled into a book for students to take home. Each story should be prefaced with the information from the Cover Sheet.

6. History in the making.

This activity reminds students that you don't have to be old to have a story to tell; in fact, when they stop to think about it, many of the stories told to them will be things that happened when those people were their age!

Give students an assignment to write down something that they think they will always remember that has happened to them in their life. What kinds of details might they include? -sounds, textures, smells, tastes?? It's also good to brainstorm a variety of possible topics, or everyone will write about their worst ow-ee.

It's good to give students a chance to share their stories orally, and to create a very powerful, respectful "container" (environment, in this case) in which these stories can be told. Remind students that although the event may appear very ordinary, within the writer the story may have great meaning. Each person's story is important and should be listened to with that in mind. ■

[Sharon Franklin, 2676 Emerald, Eugene, OR 97403]

Name _____

Room Number _____

Diary Background - Character & Setting

My diary takes place in the year _____ .

CHARACTER

Name _____ Age _____

Family names and ages (add more lines if necessary)

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

SETTING

Think carefully about these questions. Use your knowledge from this period in history to make it as authentic as possible.

1. Where is your character at the beginning of the diary? (on the East Coast? Midwest? Somewhere in the West? Out of this country? Travelling? To where? How? What time of year?)

2. What is the background of your character and his or her family (jobs, dreams, struggles, etc.)?

3. What is one event that your character will write about in his or her diary?

Consumer Education Meets Fictitious Travel Adventures

Jon Madian

While visiting the Denver Secondary Schools' Academic Skills Center Project, headed by Phil Lingwood, I saw a multifaceted unit that was clearly engaging the students in a full range of practical research and writing activities.

The unit began by having students imagine the one place in the world they'd most like to visit. After they had determined their destinations, they wrote letters to the appropriate tourist bureaus, consulates, and chambers of commerce to gain travel and background information.

Writing these letters taught students the usual letter-writing skills, and it also taught them how to write a boiler plate letter and modify it for different audiences and addresses.

While waiting for their return mail (which was soon to arrive in great stacks), students researched travel costs and alternatives with local travel agents. Some did this by phone and others visited one or more agencies and airlines. They were astonished to learn the differences in travel costs. The meaning of "comparison shopping" and the phrase "buyer beware" took on real meaning! As one student said, "I learned that you can't trust anyone because the world is so big no one knows what they're talking about. You've got to talk to everyone and then make up your own mind and hope you did the right thing."

As the information arrived in the mail and as the travel agents and airlines supplied further background and travel ideas, the students created budgets for their trips.

Next came the creative writing part of the assignment. Students were told that they were not to travel to their destinations as themselves, but rather were to travel under another persona. They might choose to be a rock star going on tour, a spy searching for secrets, an actor or actress going on vacation or recovering from a nervous breakdown, a business executive engaged in commerce, millionaire sports figure, or ?? They could be anyone but themselves, and they had to decide why this person (or group) was traveling to this particular place.

Having established the motivation and the place, and having written a budget to cover the costs of the trip, including where they would stay, the nightly price for rooms, and other expenses, students wrote detailed descriptions of their trips.

As I walked around the writing lab, I visited with one young lady who was on her way to New York to pick up her friend, Mona, I believe, who would be travelling with her to Paris. Both of them were fashion designers; they went to Paris annually to get new ideas and to talk with other designers.

"I learned that you can't trust anyone because the world is so big no one knows what they're talking about. You've got to talk to everyone and then make up your own mind and hope you did the right thing."

Two young men were writing together at another computer. I read over their shoulders; they were businessmen on their way to Australia to look after their four hotels on the Barrier Reef. It seemed they were having some business difficulties that required their personal attention. They had budgeted for a rental car—a Ferrari.

The last young person I visited with explained that he'd never seen the sights of the city where he lived—Denver. He was planning a series of bus tours. I'm not sure if he'd chosen a persona, but I had the feeling that he might really make the trip he was happily planning on a very modest budget.

From consumer skills to creative writing, these students enjoyed the best of both real and imaginary worlds. ■

13 Computer as Pen Pal

"The magic of the New Age is the ceremony of right human relations, communication, communion, community. How can I best learn to relate to the people in my immediate environment? How can I build harmony, peace, understanding with them?"

David Spangler
Towards a Planetary Vision

WORDS AROUND THE WORLD

Peter Anderson

The Book/Net Project

The package arrived from Skovde, Sweden! My class and I were delighted to discover books produced by middle school students using microcomputers as part of their school writing program. We got a parent volunteer to translate for us and we enjoyed all the information about their school, local history, current trends in music and styles, as well as their imaginative stories and inventive graphics. My students were excited by the exotic stamps and strange names and places. Most of all, they were thrilled to find so many similarities with young people in a faraway part of the world!

The Skovde School is a member of the Book/Net project based in Norwich, VT. Book/Net is an international exchange of publications produced by young students using computers to create books, magazines, and newspapers. I began this project after using word processing for several years with 5th and 6th graders in my English classes at the Marion Cross School. Then, for the 1984-85 year, I received a sabbatical to study educational computing. Traveling around the U.S., Scandinavia, and Great Britain gave me many opportunities to share ideas and learn about educational computing. Schools were eager to try publishing with their newfound computing skills, and many teachers were introducing the writing process philosophy into their classrooms. Sharing publications through Book/Net seemed like a good way to encourage this progress.

For several years now, teachers at the Marion Cross School have been teaching writing through the writing process approach. We share our work and discuss strategies for improving writing in all classes and subjects. We organize writing projects involving younger and older students as partners, and we publish books several times a year in most classes. These efforts are strongly supported by our principal, Milton Frye, and the Norwich School Board. Parents and members of the community enjoy the student books they receive as gifts or find in the town library. Everyone appreciates the pride students take in their accomplishments as they begin using the writing process and word processing to create such professional-looking products.

This tendency of the technology toward perfection can be a trap—one of the perils of publishing! While the "professional" appearance of the publication is desirable, it shouldn't come at the expense of student participation and involvement. The desktop industry would like us to buy their newest and fanciest in the on-going effort to produce a "perfect" document. But we mustn't forget that our students are eager young learners and, in their writing efforts, *progress* is usually more important than perfection.

It's not difficult to produce attractive, economical publications without expensive or very sophisticated equipment. Cutting and pasting hard copy to get camera-ready page layouts provide opportunities aplenty for developing fine motor control, just as keyboarding does.

Another related peril of classroom publishing is that too often teachers are afraid to publish student work that is less than perfect. They may fear criticism when spelling errors can still be found or typos are missed in the rush to the printer's deadline. This generally results in limiting student publications to once-a-year, somewhat ossified special editions. And yet, as parents, we don't attend our kids' concerts and sporting events expecting professional performance. We accept that they are learning, even as they may make mistakes.

I'm not suggesting that we accept careless work. I do think we need to balance our yearnings for proof of graphic and grammatical perfection with our understanding of differences in students' language development. We need to educate parents to appreciate their children's progress in all stages of the writing process. As teachers, we want to challenge our students and provide them with a variety of opportunities to publish their work. We should make every effort to encourage our colleagues to be brave, to publish without fearing they'll perish. Sharing our experiments helps others take the first steps toward establishing their own publishing projects.

During the 1985-86 year I solicited contributions from 15 schools in ten different countries. Many were able to participate immediately and sent their books to other schools on the list. It was fun to receive books in other languages and to marvel at the strange symbols on the page as well as inviting translators to read them. We all recognized similarities between students in this 9-14 age range and found many areas of common interest. We also empathized with other techno-neophytes, seeing how they, too, were struggling with the same hardware, software, and peripheral hassles. Foreign schools reported using Book/Net books as part of their English instruction. By the end of this year I expect the Book/Net group to be running at full throttle, with publications from Sweden, Japan, Scotland, Israel, Denmark, Canada, Norway, and the U.S.A.

The examples shown here represent just a very small part of the fine work contributed by **Book/Net** schools. At the Marion Cross School we include math and science in our publishing and I'd like to see much more of that in other schools. **Book/Net** cannot take any new members at present, but I'm always glad to receive copies of publications produced using computers at other schools. I encourage you to start an exchange. It doesn't have to be large—perhaps just within your district or state. ■

なぜこのプログラムは重要なのか

私が、はじめ、本当に興味を持ったのは、コンピューターが海外につながっていることです。私は、それがどのようにして働くのかが、見たかったのです。

今は、ゲーム自体に興味を持っています。このゲームは、双方の協力が必要で1度、私たちがこのゲームをしていたときに、どういうわけか、私たちは相手のに攻撃されました。CADの攻撃であることを知らなかった私たちは、腹を立てて爆弾をしかけたりして、更に相手のCADに攻撃させるようなことをしてしまったです。そして、結局、そのゲームは強度におえなくなってしまいました。

私は、信じることの大切さを学びました。そして、何をするにもがまんが必要だ思います。がまんをすればその分だけ成功したときに、うれしさも増すのではないと思います。

Eiko Tasaki

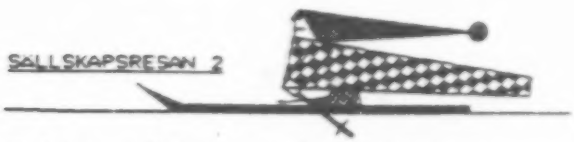
THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS PROJECT

One thing I was really interested in at first was that the computer was connected overseas. I wanted to see how it was going to work. Now I am interested in this game. This game needs the cooperation of each side. Once when we were practicing the game in school, our side's patrols were attacked by the other side. We got angry about it and placed bombs not knowing how it would make the other side's C.A.D. (Computer Assisted Defense system) much more upset and aggressive. Finally, this situation went out of control.

From this I learned how important trusting is. Also I found out that we have to do everything with patience, and it will turn into great happiness when we succeed.

Reiko Tasaki

Doshisha International High School, Kyoto, Japan



Med Lasse Åhberg och John Skolmen i huvudrollerna åker dom till Alperna. Allt blir fel från början för den tontige Stig Helmer Ohlsson redan första dagen förstör hans bagage i en snöslunga. Så fortsätter det hela veckan för [illegible]en Stig Helmer. Filmen var rolig och bra.

SE DEN GÄRNA!!!!

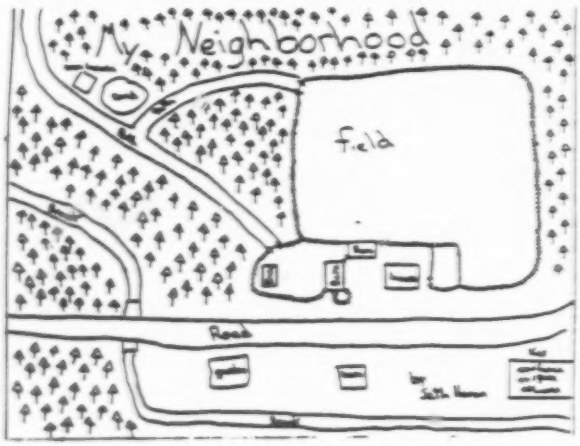
Sventorps School, Skovde, Sweden

MY NEIGHBORHOOD

by Seth Horan

My name is Seth Horan. I am eleven years old and I live on a farm with my brother Joshua who is twelve and my mother and father, Jody and Dave. We have about sixty cows, thirty sheep, and twenty chickens. I have a dog named Cassie. We got her two years ago at the Humane Society. We also have three cats: Mickey, Penny, and Rocky.

There is a path in the woods up by my house. I like to ride my motorcycle on the path. There is a big mud puddle inn the path. After it rains a lot, I have to go around the puddle. A little way up the path we have a pond. The pond is pretty big. In the middle it's about eight feet deep. There are a lot of salamanders and sunfish in the pond. In the winter we skate on it.



Across from my house there is a brook. There are sunfish and trout in the brook. One year I took all the sunfish that I caught and put them into our pond. Now there are hundreds of sunfish because they have multiplied so much.

Up next to our pond there is a treehouse. Sometimes in the summer when I have friends over we sleep in the treehouse. My mom and dad made it a few years ago. It took a few days to make the treehouse. It is about six feet by twelve feet and there is a little porch outside the door. There are also three windows. There is a ladder from the porch and a rope ladder hanging from one of the windows.

We have three barns. Last year my mother and father built a huge barn that can hold about six thousand bales of hay.

Marion Cross School, Norwich, VT, USA

[Peter Anderson, the Marion Cross School, Norwich, VT 05055]

THE COMPUTER AS LITERATE PEN PAL

While I was a writer-in-residence at a word processing-supported language arts project, I began to write letters to students as if they were written by the computer.

The students had named the computer "Ham" (Hot Air Machine) the previous year. This naming came about when I wrote a letter as if it were from the computer. The computer introduced itself as new to the school, uncertain about "stuff," and needing some friends with a firmer hand on the world and on junior high reality. Ham's relationship with the students is illustrated by this letter from a 7th grade student:

Dear Ham,

Hello! You might know me from last year. You printed my poems last year and some of them you still might have. I'm not very tall. I am about as big as you (sittin on the table). I have dishwater blonde hair, blue eyes, and I do have a little of my baby fat hanging here and there. I'm glad you are here. I have a lot of fun writing poems, drawing pictures (etc.). Thank you for letting me come see you. I am going to come see you maybe Friday or Monday, OK? Well, gotta go now so bye-bye.

Your Friend, Joellen D.

When the school was empty and the moon cast shadows across Ham's blank screen, then Ham could think about anything. Mostly Ham thought about what students had written and then wrote letters in response. The letters were usually written to the whole class. In some letters, written to the class, Ham would respond to each student. Here is the beginning of such a letter:

"Dear Mr. Windsor's Morning Poets:

I reread your name poems last night. Zipped 'em flashing though my circuits at about four in the morning.

I want to talk to you about them. FANTASTIC! I want to quote lines and whole poems, and I need to do it for everyone since everyone's poem has something neat in it....

Tressa told so simply, well, and clearly the images of the rickety old house, the "Sold By Owner" sign, the gray colored car blocking the old man's view and making him angry. Notice the repetition of sounds.

Here is the first part of Tressa's name acrostic poem:

The house on the corner was a
Rickety old house.
Each time I went there, it
Seemed to have a
Sold by owner sign
At the front of the house

Ham couldn't resist the opportunity to develop practice activities and new lessons. Here Ham presents a worksheet in response to the students' writing:

Dear Kids in Mrs. Buenos' Class:

As I told you in my last letter, I think you have great imaginations, and you're good at describing. I had a problem reading some of your stories because some of you didn't bother to help me see where sentences begin or end. Maybe you didn't know yourselves, or maybe you just didn't want to bother with periods and capitals.

Anyway, I've been thinking about that problem...and I decided to write an exercise which I hope will help you. In this exercise, there are no capitals for the beginning of sentences and no periods for the endings. Read this through once and you'll see how hard it is to understand:

i was sitting in the sunshine it was really warm and bright i could feel that the sun was helping me grow and i...."

The following is a sample letter as if it were written by a class or school computer after the 4th grade students entered their Haiku poems. It is recommended that students receive their own copies of the letter to place in their individual poetry notebooks. A follow-up assignment can ask students to answer the computer's letter.

Dear Students in Room 19:

What fun it has been reading your Haiku poems. Each poem is a picture. Sometimes the picture is still, but usually it is moving. One of my favorite moving pictures is Tracy's:

Run, little mouse, run
The cat is right behind you
Hop, little mouse, hop!

Another is Michael's:

A boat in the lake
Is wandering by itself
Floating by and by

Here are two wonderful still pictures:

I am a Leprechaun
And a little magic man
I am a good one!
by Walter

Louis J. writes:
Do you like Haiku?
Haikus are fun to write, when
You write them yourself

After reading all of your poems I think I understand how it works. A picture that creates a feeling in three short lines with the middle line the longest:

On the cracked wood
Table after the earthquake
Clay cool water jug

Swing, little swing, swing
As I close the classroom door
You are still swinging

I think I was lucky. One came out with a 5-7-5 syllable line pattern.

Write me some more poems and I'll write you back soon.

Signed, your poetry pal ■

Ga, ga, da, da,
I want daddy fast.
Ga, ga, boo, boo,
I hurt my boo, boo.
Ga, ga, meow, meow,
The cat is hurt.
Ga, ga, leap, leap,
I want to go to sleep.
Ga, ga, doo, doo,
Change my diaper.
Candice Westerman
2nd Grade

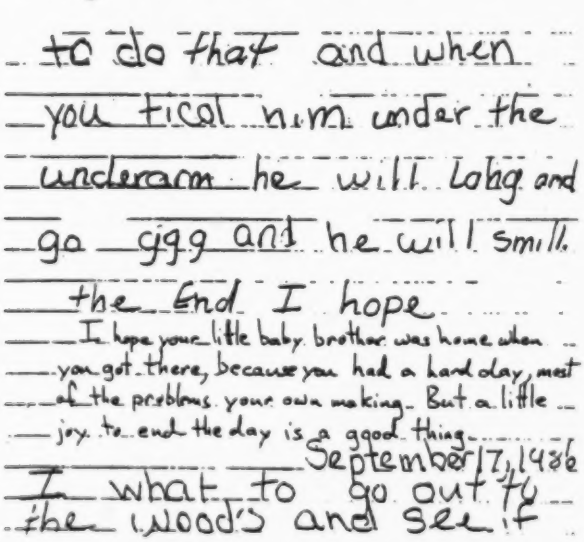
Using Personal Journals To Become A Pen Pal With Your Students

Jon Madian

Tom Nicas teaches third grade at Peach Spring School on the Hualapai reservation in Peach Spring, AZ. Tom is also a master of the personal written response to his students' journal entries. Through this technique he motivates students to read and write, he models good, personal writing for them, he lets them know he cares, and he teaches all kinds of lessons. He never corrects their invented spellings or anything else in their journals. He just lets them know he's interested.

After one student described wooden, hand-painted toys in a store in Mexico and a puppet he received, Tom responded by expanding upon the theme and the student's relationship with his new toy. "The toys in Mexico seem different from the ones here. They are made of wood and seem to be made by a person who then paints them. I think your puppet is really great, and you will appreciate it even more when you get older. It can be one of your antiques."

When another student wrote about her baby brother, Tom took the opportunity to say, "I hope your little baby brother was home when you got there, because you had a hard day, most of the problems of your own making. But a little joy to end the day is a good thing."


to do that and when
you tical him under the
underarm he will laug and
go ggg and he will smill.
the End I hope
I hope your litle baby brother was home when
you got there, because you had a hard day, most
of the problems your own making. But a little
joy to end the day is a good thing.
September 17, 1986
I what to go out to
the woods and see if

Another student wrote about a cow he and his sister received as a gift, and Tom responded: "That's a nice gift. It is fun going out and working your cows. When that little heifer grows a little it'll have babies. And those babies will have babies. And pretty soon you have a whole herd. In the meantime you have a cuddly, brown calf. Enjoy.

After one student listed the contents of a meal, Tom wrote: "That's a lot of food going into a small body. By the way, I still like you even though you had to stay after school to finish your journal."

When one student shared about a Christmas present, Tom taught a little science lesson: "I like that little dolphin you got for Christmas. It's great the way it changes colors. Dolphins are my favorite animal. I like the way they leap and dive. I love seeing them play. I even have a necklace with two on the end. Did you know even though they live in the sea, they are not fish, but mammals? They have fine hair, feed their babies milk, and are warm-blooded."

Tom turned a student's report about his success in basket shooting competition into a character lesson: "I'm real happy for you that you won that trophy. It took courage to stand up in front of everyone and get yourself together so you could concentrate on what you had to do to make hoops. It shows you are special and you can do the same thing in reading. If you get scared, just concentrate harder."

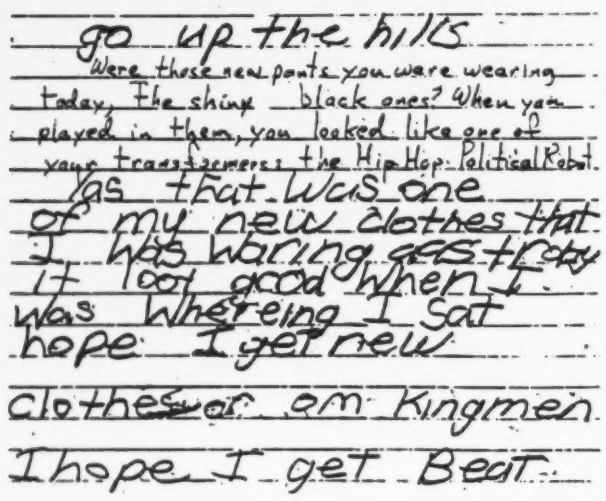
In a series of interactions between Tom and a student writing about his new clothes, Tom helped this child to become positively involved in school. The student wrote "Today my mom is going to get me now (new) klos (clothes) in Kingmen for me beacse Jay has lot of now klos and I onl have lalt be now klos (little bit new clothes). I what (want) wher (wear) it to school."

Tom's response was, "You better stop eating so many sweets and breads—otherwise you'll get too fat and won't be able to fit into all those nice new clothes your mom is going to buy you."

The next day the boy wrote more about the "now clothes." ("Clothes" now spelled correctly, even though no corrections appear in the journal. Did the student copy the correct spelling from Tom's remarks?)

Tom answers: "I hope you wear your new clothes to school so I can see you in them. Then I'll say 'that cool cat is sure in a style today.'"

The next day Tom asks, "Were those new pants you were wearing today—the shiny, black ones? When you played in them, you looked like one of your transformers—the Hip Hop Political Robot!"

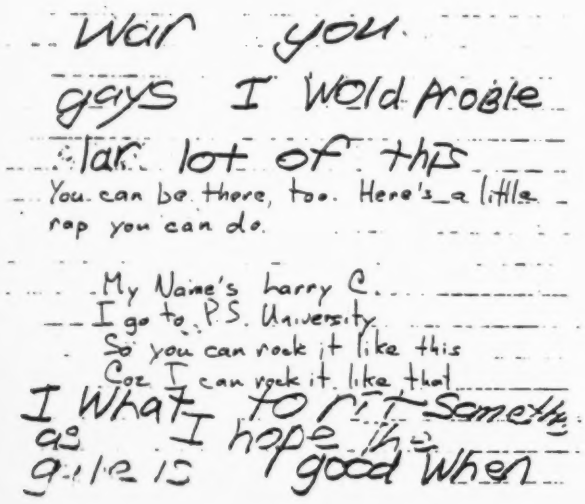

go up the hills
Were those new pants you were wearing today, The shiny black ones? When you played in them, you looked like one of your transformers the Hip Hop Political Robot.
Yas that was one of my new clothes that I was waring yesterday it look good when I was Whereing I sat
hope I get new
clothes on Kingmen
I hope I get Beat

The student answers, "Yas that was one of my new clothes that I was waring...."

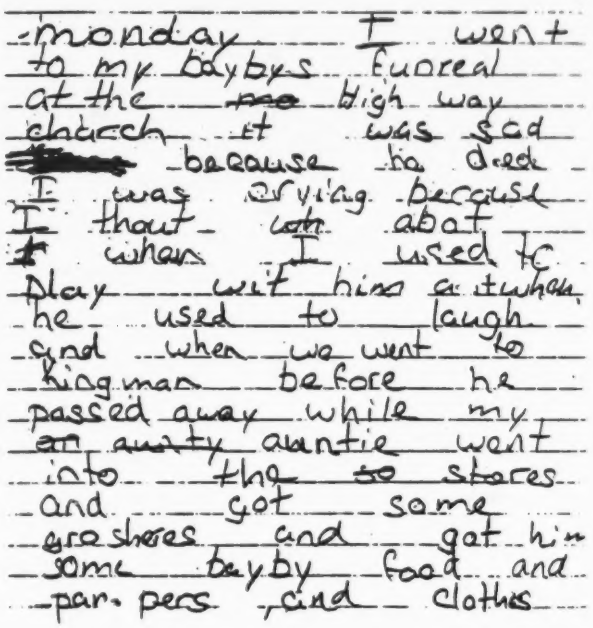
Tom observes that throughout this interaction, the boy stopped being truant, and his work improved.

When one Indian student complained about not knowing any raps, Tom responded, "Here's a little rap you can do:

My name's Larry C.
I go to P.S. University
So you can rock it like this
Coz I can rock it like that."


Wat you
gays I Wold Proble
Tak lot of this
You can be there, too. Here's a little
rap you can do.
My Naine's Larry C.
I go to P.S. University
So you can rock it like this
Coz I can rock it like that
I What I to rit Someth
as I hope th
g.i.e is good When

After her baby cousin's funeral, one student wrote, "I went to my baybys funreal at the high way church it was sad because he cied. I was crying because I thout abot when I used to play wit him and dhen he used to laugh and when he went to kingman before he passed away while my auntie went into the stores and got some grosheres and got him some bayby food and pampers and clothes he was playing and he laughing I was just watching him he was really cute I wanted to really hug him but I knew that if I do that he would cry and cry I was telling my auntie and; he was still playing and we were going to taco bell and I had five dollers and I got a taco it tast good and we went home it was six o'clok I go home at 7:00."



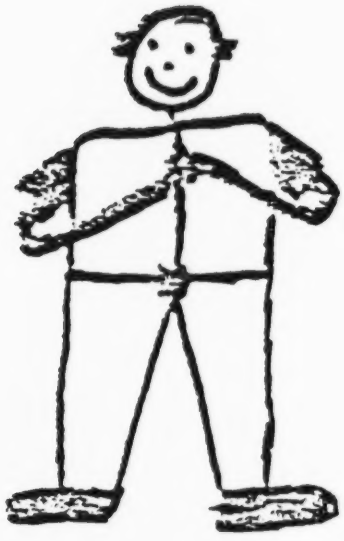
Tom responds: "The memories you have of your baby cousin are precious. They will never leave you. A part of him is alive inside you."

After another student writes about an uncle's funeral and the family returning home, Tom writes, "I'll bet you were really happy to see your mom and baby brother again. Sometimes after you lose someone in your family, like your dad's brother dying, the rest of the family needs to be together for awhile to mourn their loss." ■

. . . . . .

[With special thanks to Tom Nicas and his students at Peach Spring School.]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



THE Writing NOTEBOOK

A WEALTH OF IDEAS.

Prices guaranteed through July 1, 1989

THE JOURNAL.

Please begin my subscription to **THE WRITING NOTEBOOK: Creative Word Processing in the Classroom** immediately!

☐ Enclosed is a purchase order or check for **$30 (U.S. $)** for a 1-year **INSTITUTIONAL (school) or outside-U.S.** subscription.

Quantity Order (please specify):

_____ 2-10 subscriptions $27 each (U.S. $)

_____ 11-25 subscriptions $24 each (U.S. $)

_____ 26 or more subscriptions $20 each (U.S. $)

☐ Enclosed is a check or money order for **$20** for a 1-year **INDIVIDUAL** subscription (personal check).

☐ Please **bill me** for **$23 INDIVIDUAL** subscription.

Journal Subtotal $_____

THE BOOK.

Please send me **Making the Literature, Writing, Word Processing Connection: The Best of The Writing Notebook** (2nd. ed.). Please specify quantity.

_____ 1-10 copies $21. (U.S. $) ea.

_____ 11-25 copies $19. (U.S. $) ea.

_____ 26-99 copies $16. (U.S. $) ea.

_____ Over 100 copies $14. (U.S. $) ea.

Book Subtotal $_____

BACK ISSUES OF THE WRITING NOTEBOOK.

The following back issues are available for $5. each. Limited to supply on hand. Please specify quantity.

[SOLD OUT] September/October 1986 *(a focus on Cooperative Learning)*

_____ November/December 1986 *(a focus on Keyboarding)*

_____ January/February 1987 *(a focus on Revising)*

[SOLD OUT] April/May 1987 *(a focus on Writing Across the Curriculum)*

_____ September/October 1987 *(a focus on Pen Pals)*

_____ November/December 1987 *(a focus on Global Awareness)*

[SOLD OUT] January/February 1988 *(a focus on Managing Computers in Writing)*

_____ April/May 1988 *(a focus on Staff Development)*

[SOLD OUT] September/October 1988 *(a focus on Drama & Play Writing)*

_____ November/December 1988 *(a focus on New Writing Tools)*

_____ January/February 1989 *(a focus on Cultural Relevance and Software)*

_____ April/May 1989 *(a focus on Writing via Telecommunications)*

Back Issues Subtotal $_____

[continued on other side]

PACKETS OF REPRINTS.

Specific topics for specific needs.

	Title	Cost	Quantity	Subtotal
	Cooperative Learning Ideas for making cooperative learning work in your classroom. Includes hints on structuring cooperative learning groups, templates for peer editing, and specific curriculum units. *(20 pages)*	**$7.00**		
	Keyboarding Both philosophy and activities on this important topic are included. *(11 pages)*	**$6.00**		
	Writing as a Process Fourteen articles on this topic, including strategies, specific activities for all grade levels, and templates. *(24 pages)*	**$7.00**		
	Writing Using Specific Software Includes ideas and templates for FrEd Writer, LogoWriter, and the Milliken Word Processor. *(28 pages)*	**$8.00**		
	Curriculum/Study Units Seven specific units for classroom use at all levels, including a scope and sequence of story writing plus other writing activities. Some units include reproducible worksheets. *(21 pages)*	**$7.00**		
	Staff Development Tried and tested ideas for staff development in writing and word processing. Includes cooperative learning and staff development, and training for technology. *(20 pages)*	**$10.00**		
	Poetry and Story Writing Ideas and strategies for all levels. Includes many samples of student writing at different levels. *(35 pages)*	**$8.00**		
	Supplement to MAKING THE LITERATURE, WRITING, WORD PROCESSING CONNECTION For those of you who own the original edition of this book, this packet contains all the pages added to the revised edition, including selected editorials and a new chapter on Staff Development. *(60 pages)*	**$9.00**		
NEW!	**Writing Across the Curriculum** A rich assortment of ideas, lesson plans, and strategies for writing across the curriculum. *(50 pages)*	**$10.00**		
NEW!	**Publishing Student Writing** Includes a 3-part series on design ideas in desktop publishing and other ideas for successful desktop publishing in all curriculum areas. *(28 pages)*	**$8.00**		

Packets Subtotal $_____

Total From Both Sides $_____

Inside the U.S.
If under $100, add 7% for shipping/handling. If over $100, add 5% for shipping/handling. $_____

Foreign Shipping
Canada and Mexico. The Writing Notebook subscriptions: Add ☐ $6. surface ☐ $8. airmail delivery. $_____
You will be billed for shipping on remaining order. Please specify ☐ surface ☐ airmail delivery.
Other Countries. The Writing Notebook subscriptions: Add ☐ $8. surface ☐ $20. airmail. $_____
You will be billed for shipping on remaining order. Please specify: ☐ surface ☐ airmail delivery.

GRAND TOTAL (U.S.) $_____

SHIP TO

Name_____ Position_____

School_____

Address _____

_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____ Telephone_____/_____

BILL TO (if different from above)

_____

_____

Where did you hear about The Writing Notebook? _____

☐ I would like **free flyers** for dissemination. Quantity needed: _____ Date needed: _____

Do you know of people who would like to receive a brochure?

Name_____ Position_____ Name_____ Position_____

Address _____ Address _____

Make checks payable to Creative Word Processing.

CREATIVE WORD PROCESSING IN THE CLASSROOM

P. O. Box 1268 • Eugene, OR 97440-1268 • Ph. 503/344-7125